

**CANDIDATE GENDER AND ELECTORAL SUCCESS IN PARTY  
LIST PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION (PR LIST) SYSTEMS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis studies women politicians' journey along the path from candidates to elected representatives in party list proportional representation (PR list) systems. While past literature provides sufficient evidence that more women are elected in proportional electoral systems than in majority / plurality systems, there is limited research explaining the differences in women's representation across varying types of PR list systems. This thesis aims to fill that gap, by focusing primarily on the election of women across preferential (open and ordered list systems) and non-preferential (closed list systems) PR list voting systems. Moreover, unlike the vast majority of previous research, which has relied on aggregate level data only, this research investigates the election of women at the individual candidate level. Such an approach allows the present thesis to consider, next to traditional aggregate level predictors, how party gatekeepers and the news media may either support or hinder women in progressing from candidates to elected representatives.

Since the focus is set on the 2009 European Parliament elections, this thesis investigates the process of electing women cross-nationally. The results show that female candidates have a higher likelihood of being elected in non-preferential closed list voting systems than in preferential ordered list voting systems. The results suggest that this is the case because, first, party gatekeepers in ordered list systems place women in less viable electoral list positions than party gatekeepers in closed list systems; second, media cover female candidates less in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems; and finally, female candidates in ordered list systems fail to make up their less competitive starting position with preference votes because preference votes in ordered list systems do not significantly alter the initial party list rankings.

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## **PART I – Introduction**

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

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*Beneath the descriptions of how women have organised to get into elected office lies the assumption that it matters that they get there.*

*We may not know exactly why it matters – we may have different and even conflicting theories about this – but we are nonetheless sure that it does.*

*(Stokes 2005: 25)*

There are fewer women than men in nearly all democratically elected bodies in the world. Since, at the same time, the democratic legitimacy of these legislatures lies in their ability to provide political representation to the electorate many scholars have posed a question whether parliaments in which certain societal sub-groups are continuously underrepresented are nevertheless capable of providing political representation to the entire population. Moreover, many empirical studies suggest that a group bias in descriptive representation may not only present a problem with political legitimacy but is also likely to

have policy consequences. For example, issues that are more important to women may well be overlooked or are unlikely to take priority in the political process where women are underrepresented in the legislature (Dovi 2002; Mansbridge 1999; Sapiro 1981; Swers 2005; Weldon 2002). This implies that in order to ensure that government policies respond to women's interests and policy preferences (substantive representation) female representatives need to be present in legislative bodies.

While in almost all democratic countries women are descriptively underrepresented in the political process, there are significant cross-national differences in the proportion of legislative seats held by women. Political power is more equally distributed between men and women in some countries compared to others. This has led a number of scholars to study the determinants of women's descriptive representation in order to identify the conditions in which the election of women is more likely.

### **1.1 Limitations of previous work**

Most of the cross-national research on women's descriptive representation attempts to explain gender differences in the percentage of seats held by women using aggregate level variables, such as electoral rules, socio-economic development or overall gender equality (Caul 1999; Hogan 2001; Jones 2009; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Tripp and Kang 2008). The large majority of the past research has, therefore, explained the gender gap in descriptive representation with institutional variables only. This research provides empirical evidence that certain institutional designs help to reduce the gender gap in descriptive representation while others

facilitate the status quo (Darcy et al. 1994; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Schmidt 2009; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005).

While this research answers a relevant question about women's representation, the dominance of the aggregate level approach has limited research on other equally related and essential questions. One of the few exceptions is the novel work by Miki Caul (1999), which goes beyond the conventional country level approach and treats parties as the units of analysis. This allows her to show how a number of party characteristics, such as party ideology, centralisation, and institutionalisation, influence the number of women elected. Similarly, individual level analysis is likely to shed light on thus far omitted candidate level variables which may help us better understand the mechanisms behind the election of women. Individual level analysis is likely to be beneficial as only this way would it be possible to tease out how individual, party, media, and country level factors influence and condition the election of women.

Also, the single focus on counting the numbers of women elected (and on the aggregate (or party) level variables explaining it), ignores the fact that the actual individual female candidates have to, first, pass the electoral threshold. Therefore, by knowing more about what affects an individual female candidate's electoral chances we are likely to have a more comprehensive understanding of the issues related to women's descriptive representation.

Candidate level research is rare in comparative politics primarily due to the lack of comparative data. One of the few exceptions to this is a recent study by Schwindt-Bayer et al. (2010) that tests the impact of candidate gender on electoral success in three single-transferable vote systems. This study also calls for more research on "how the individual characteristics of female candidates, the parties to which they belong to, and the districts in

which they are running affect their prospects for election” (Schwindt-Bayer et al. 2010: 707).

## 1.2 The argument in brief

Despite the fact that past research provides empirical evidence that certain institutional designs, i.e. proportional representation and closed party list voting, promote the election of women, we have limited knowledge about why this is the case. I suggest that the reason we know little about the mechanisms contributing to the election of women is primarily due to the fact that the majority of past research has consistently omitted individual and party level variables. As a result, we may, for example, overestimate the impact of some electoral rules and institutions while discounting the role that parties and media have in facilitating or hindering women’s chances for an elected seat.

As this thesis is conducted at the level of the individual candidate – a rarity among studies on the election of women – this thesis is not only able to test the effects of individual-level characteristics but also to establish whether individual, party, and institutional variables affect female candidates in the same way as they affect male candidates. I also assume that it is likely that (i) certain individual and party level variables affect women’s (and men’s) electoral chances differently in varying institutional contexts, or (ii) under different institutional contexts parties and individual candidates behave differently, and thereby have different prospects for election.

Besides applying a unique individual level approach in this field of research, this thesis advances the conventional aggregate-level approach in other ways, too. For example, the previous literature provides convincing evidence that women have higher levels of

descriptive representation in PR list systems compared to majority / plurality systems (Caul 1999; Darcy et al. 1994; Hogan 2001; Matland and Studlar 1998; Norris 1996; Norris and Franklin 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Reynolds 1999; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). This research, however, has often ignored two important points. First, women's descriptive representation varies significantly across countries that employ PR list systems. While in some countries such as Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden, women constitute more than 40 per cent of all the members of the parliament, in other PR list countries such as France and Greece, they comprise less than 20 per cent, and in countries like Hungary and Romania only around 10 per cent of parliamentary seats are held by women. Second, PR list systems are not homogenous but vary in important ways from one another (i.e. preferential / non-preferential voting). To address these two issues, this thesis concentrates on studying the election of women in varying types of PR list systems in order to improve our understanding of how institutional context conditions how equally political power is distributed between men and women.

Moreover, this thesis pays special attention to individual candidate's party-determined viability. Party-determined viability (also referred to as candidate viability in the thesis) indicates how favourably party-gatekeepers position the candidate on the electoral list in PR list systems. We know that a candidate's likelihood to be elected depends on the constituency in which she runs in first-past-the-post systems (see for example, Ryan et al. 2010). Similarly, an individual candidate's chances for electoral success depend on her electoral list placement in PR list systems. However, the literature on women's descriptive representation has had to omit this variable of interest as aggregate level studies cannot look at individual level viability and thus investigate whether party gatekeepers hinder the chances of women by placing them on uncompetitive list positions.

As this thesis applies an individual level approach in a cross-sectional setting, I am not only able to study possible gender bias in candidate list placement and whether candidate viability affects women's and men's likelihood of being elected to a different degree, but also how variations in the types of PR list systems may have a differing impact or conditioning effect on women candidates' viability and thus on their likelihood for electoral success.

By applying this novel approach, this thesis examines whether once a prospective candidate has managed to enter a race, the candidate's gender systematically works against (or for) her. I claim that there are a number of stages along the path from a candidate to an elected representative. At first, clearly, one needs to become a candidate, but perhaps more importantly a viable candidate. Therefore, this thesis studies in detail what influences why some candidates are more likely to be endorsed by their party than others. Secondly, I examine how this party-determined viability (electoral list ranking in PR list systems) affects other stages of getting elected.

Another stage that I suggest determines individual candidate's electoral success is how much (and what type of) media coverage a candidate is able to receive during the campaign period. Therefore, this thesis also examines in detail predictors of individual level media coverage because the factors predicting individual candidate's likelihood for news media coverage may influence the candidate's chances for electoral success, too. Moreover, I also expect a candidate's party-determined viability to explain the variance in individual news media coverage. It is reasonable to assume that media may show greater bias against non-viable candidates in general than exclusively towards female candidates (irrespective of their list placement). Therefore, by studying in detail the variables affecting individual

candidates' news media coverage, I can shed light on some mechanisms behind women's electoral success which may otherwise be overlooked.

Finally, once the candidates have passed the party gatekeepers and the news media, the actual election of representatives takes place. In this stage I treat the previous dependent variables – a candidate's party-determined viability and individual news media visibility – as central explanatory variables. In all the stages, I also pay special attention to why and how the institutional setting and wider context conditions the individual and party level effects. I hypothesise that party gatekeepers', candidates', and the news media's behaviour varies in different institutional and contextual settings. I test this hypothesis across varying types of PR list systems. Looking at PR list systems only allows me to answer questions about the impact of viability and media coverage on women's electoral success while controlling for some institutional effects. Also, as mentioned above, there are differences with respect to specific electoral rules as well as variation in women's representation to be explained across PR list systems. Such an approach broadens our knowledge and understanding of the mechanisms facilitating or retaining women's descriptive representation in general.

### **1.3 Case selection: Why European Parliamentary elections?**

As this thesis aims to go beyond describing differences on aggregate level data, it employs the 2009 European Election Study's Candidate Survey and Media Content Data. These data enable me to study how country, party, and individual level variables affect an individual candidate's chances for viable candidacy, individual news media coverage, and electoral success, dependent on her gender. All European Union member states, with the

exception of Malta, Ireland, and the Northern Ireland constituency of the United Kingdom, employ PR list systems for the election of the members of the European Parliament. While all countries have to use a proportional electoral system, they are left with a choice of how open a ballot structure they apply (preference and non-preference voting system). Therefore, the European parliamentary elections provide an excellent testing ground for the main hypotheses of this research as a variety of electoral rules employed in different PR list systems are utilised for the election of members of the European parliament in different EU member states. Moreover, the unique individual level data collected during the European elections allow this research to control for a variety of individual, party, and institutional level variables.

#### **1.4 Thesis overview**

In the following chapters, I will tackle the subjects of women's descriptive representation, party-determined viable candidacy, women's news media coverage, and the election of women at an individual level both in a theoretical and an empirical way. These chapters are organised in four main sections: Theory (Chapter Two), Research Design (Chapter Three), Election of Women at the Aggregate Level (Chapter Four), and Election of Women at the Individual Level (Chapters Five, Six, and Seven).

The Theory section is, therefore, focused on the theoretical grounds of the research. In Chapter Two, the theory of women's political representation is presented. I start by making a synthesis of the research in the field of women's descriptive representation that has primarily relied on aggregate level data only. After that, I discuss how and at which stage of the election the traditional predictors of women's descriptive representation

highlighted by past research are likely to influence female candidates' individual electoral chances. I conclude the Theory section by presenting and describing the central expectations of the thesis.

In the Research Design section I, first, introduce conceptually the central variables used in this thesis. I continue by discussing the data sources that I utilise in order to conduct the empirical analysis. This part of the thesis also presents the general methods and the measurement of the central variables used for the analysis.

The following section investigates empirically how the traditional predictors associated with women's descriptive representation affect (i) the proportion of women among candidates, (ii) the visibility of female candidates in the news media during the campaign, (iii) the proportion of women among candidates, and (iv) the aggregate success rate at which women progress from candidates to elected representatives. Chapter Four, thus, provides empirical evidence of the stage at which women are elected and how the conventional predictors of women's descriptive representation affect female candidates' electoral chances.

The final section studies the election of women at an individual level. I distinguish three sets of actors that are likely to influence individual's path from candidates to elected representatives. First, in Chapter Five, I study how party gatekeepers support or hinder women candidates' electoral chances in different institutional and contextual settings by the way in which they rank women in electoral list. In Chapter Six, I proceed by examining how the party gatekeepers' "treatment" of female candidates affects women's news media "treatment". Therefore, Chapter Six explains the amounts of news media coverage female candidates receive during the campaign. Following that, in Chapter Seven I study how the party gatekeepers' decisions and the news media coverage, together with conventional

aggregate level predictors, explain women candidates' likelihood of winning the elected office.

Finally, Chapter Eight revises the most important findings of this research, debates some of the shortcomings related to both data availability and other methodological concerns, and ends with some suggestions for future research.

## **PART II – THEORY**

---

## **2 WOMEN'S DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION UNDER VARYING INSTITUTIONAL AND CONTEXTUAL SETTINGS**

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Past research offers some valuable insights into the determinants of women's representation. However, due to the fact that the majority of this research has had to rely on aggregate data only, there is little understanding of why certain country level variables affect the election of women the way they do and what are the underlying mechanisms driving these effects. Most importantly, the aggregate level studies have not been able to incorporate candidate viability – an important predictor of individual level likelihood for electoral success – in their analysis. In order to address this puzzle, this Chapter summarises the findings from previous literature on women's descriptive representation. I pay special attention to how individual, party and country level variables, which are identified by previous literature, may interact with each other, causing the need to apply an individual level approach to fully understand the mechanisms behind the election of women. Special emphasis is paid on how variations in PR list systems have a differing impact or

conditioning effect on women's viability, their news media visibility, and thus on their likelihood of getting elected. But before proceeding to discuss the possible mechanisms explaining the dearth of women's descriptive representation, this Chapter explains the concept of representation and the main arguments for why we should care about the lack of women in elected offices.

## **2.1 Women's political representation**

### *2.1.1 The concept of representation*

Most of the current literature on political representation takes Hannah Pitkin's (1967) seminal work on the concept of representation as a starting point. According to Pitkin, political representation is the process where elected officials are "making present in some sense of something which is nevertheless not present literally or in fact" (Pitkin 1967: 8-9). The current thesis relies on this definition of representation and argues that *political representation is a process where elected representatives make present in the policy-making process the political views and interests of voters*. Therefore, political representation is a tool by which democratic governance works; it is a mechanism whose aim is to ensure that citizens' views and interests are translated into policies.

Since political representation is the corner stone of democracy, there is an extensive scholarly debate about the conditions under which political representation functions optimally. Firstly, there is the need for formal rules that regulate the election of representatives (formal representation) (Pitkin 1967). Formal rules not only regulate when and how someone can become a legitimate political representative, but they also allow the

represented to sanction their representatives ex post (Powell 2000). In other words, formal representation is necessary to provide voters with the ability to authorise and/or to keep their representatives accountable (Mansbridge 2003).

Many scholars argue that next to the formal rules, who the representative is also matters. The literature which is concerned with the descriptive representation of traditionally disadvantaged groups, such as women and ethnic minorities, argues that these groups' interests can only be fully represented by representatives who "look like them" (Krook 2010; Mansbridge 2003; Sapiro 1981). Scholars advocating for descriptive representation claim that only governments where different societal subgroups are present can respond to these subgroups' policy interests and provide substantive representation (Campbell et al. 2010; Krook 2010; Sapiro 1981). Therefore, substantive representation, "acting in the interests of the represented in a manner responsive to them" (Pitkin 1967: 209), is more feasible with descriptive representatives. Moreover, descriptive representatives may also enhance symbolic representation (the represented feel that they are effectively and fairly represented). If a representative looks more like the represented, she is not only more likely to be policy responsive, but in turn the voters may also perceive and evaluate this representative more positively (Mishler and Rose 1997).

### *2.1.2 Why women's representation matters*

But which groups need to be represented? Do women constitute a group and thus require descriptive representation to have their voice heard or should women be considered as individuals only? In other words, is being a woman politically relevant?

Mansbridge (1999: 628) distinguishes four conditions under which it is justified to prefer descriptive representatives to non-descriptive ones: (i) better communication in the

context of a history of mistrust; (ii) innovative thinking in a situation of uncrystallised and not fully articulated interests; (iii) creating a social meaning of “ability to rule” in a context where it has been historically seriously questioned (setting role models); and (iv) increasing the de facto legitimacy of the political community in contexts of past discrimination.

Mansbridge (1999), thus, argues that women should represent women (a marginalised group) when they distrust men (relatively more privileged citizens) and when women possess political preferences that have not been fully articulated.

Most scholars who study women’s descriptive representation assume that despite the fact that different women have different political views and preferences (uncrystallised and not fully articulated interest as a group), they also share some common interests that differ to a certain extent from the interests of men (i.e. Caul 1999; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Krook 2010). At the same time, unlike some other historically disadvantaged groups (i.e. ethnic minorities, immigrant groups), women do not share a common identity or a common set of attributes that all women have in common, but, rather, being a woman “names a set of structural constraints and relations to practice-inert objects that condition action and its meaning” (Young 1994: 737).

This has led some to raise the question: if women do not share a common identity or experiences, in what sense can women in office represent women? Weldon (2002: 1156) argues that a white, straight, middle class mother cannot speak for African American women, or poor women, or lesbian women on the basis of her identity and experience any better than a man can speak for a woman merely on the basis of his experiences and identity. Therefore, while being a woman can be considered to be politically relevant, it is, at the same time, extremely difficult to establish what being a woman is and what women’s political interests exactly are. While some would claim that this is the reason why women

do not need to be represented by women, Mansbridge argues the opposite by saying the less one knows how a descriptive representative should act, the more it is necessary to have descriptive representatives (Mansbridge 1999: 630).

Moreover, despite the fact that women do not form a homogenous group with shared identity and policy preferences, all women are more likely to confront some issues, such as the relationship between motherhood and work, than men. Therefore, women do not perhaps share a list of policy proposals but more a list of “women’s issues” (Weldon 2002: 1157). Sapiro (1981) emphasises this position by stating that “women do have distinctive position and a shared set of problems that characterise a special interest. Many of these distinctions are located in the institution in which women and men are probably most often assumed to have common interests, the family. Much has been made of the “sharing” or “democratic” model of the modern family, but whatever democratisation has taken place, it has not come close to erasing the division of labour and, indeed, stratification, by sex” (Sapiro 1981: 703). Until today, in many countries women are less likely to be in the labour market; they remain in different sectors and enjoy a different status there than men; and spend more time on unpaid work at home. Therefore, despite the fact that women are also divided, for example, by age, race, class, and marital status, they also share many common problems and interest.

### *2.1.3 Who should represent women? The link between descriptive and substantive representation*

Since women’s policy preferences are likely to differ from men’s in certain policy areas, modern scholars have most frequently questioned whether substantive representation

(“acting for”) is feasible without descriptive representation (see for example, Celis and Childs 2008; Murray 2008).

Even though Pitkin’s initial model of representation is an integrated model, she nevertheless argues that a representative of a given race, gender, or economic background is capable of representing the interests and views of voters with another racial, ethnic, or economic background, or gender (Pitkin 1967). For Pitkin and many others who follow her tradition, descriptive representation concerns the question of what the representatives “look like” only, and ignores what they “do” (the latter is central to substantive representation). For this reason, she states that arguments for descriptive representation have “no room for representation as accountability” (Pitkin 1967: 89).

Virginia Sapiro was one of the first to substantially disagree with Pitkin’s claim by arguing that trusting some groups to protect another group’s interests was and continues to be reckless (Sapiro 1981). She claims that with establishing universal suffrage we do not believe anymore in husbands’ right or ability to take care of their wives’ political interests. Following this same logic, it also seems unreasonable that we should believe in male policy-makers’ ability to protect female voters’ interests as well as women could (Sapiro 1981).

Eulau and Karps (1978) agree with the fact that different dimensions of representation are interlinked. They argue that concentrating on only one component of representation as a substantive concept, we are likely to underestimate the complexity of representation in the real world of politics. “How else could one explain that representatives manage to stay in office in spite of the fact that they are *not* necessarily or always [substantively] responsive to the represented?” (Eulau and Karps 1978: 61). Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005: 410) argue that in order to have policies that respond to citizens’

wishes (substantive representation) we need formal rules to elect the representatives (formal representation) as well as different subgroups of the society to be present in the elected offices (descriptive representation).

Mishler and Rose (1997) go even further by linking descriptive and substantive representation to symbolic representation. They believe that if a representative looks more like the represented, she is more likely to be policy responsive (substantive representation), and in return the voters also perceive and evaluate their representatives more positively (symbolic representation). Therefore, women's presence in legislative offices should not only make the elected body "look nicer" but also increase both policy responsiveness and support for incumbents which in turn should increase the legislature's overall democratic legitimacy (Mishler and Rose 1997).

Since the early 1990s empirical researchers have also attempted to provide evidence of the links between different dimensions of representation. Vega and Firestone (1995) provide mixed empirical evidence of the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation. Their study suggests that both bill introductions and cohesive voting patterns demonstrate that female members of the US Congress are increasingly supporting women's issues. At the same time, they acknowledge that constituency, district, and party characteristics remain better predictors of congressional voting behaviour than gender does (Vega and Firestone 1995: 220).

More recent empirical research, however, sees a stronger link between descriptive representation and substantive representation. Several studies report, for example, how women's presence introduces substantively new values and ideas into the political system (Fox 1997; Fox and Lawless 2004; MacDonald and O'Brien 2011; Murray 2008; Wängnerud 2009); how races in which women are candidates tend to feature more attention

to women's issues (Fox 1997; Kahn 1993); and how female officeholders are more likely to pursue legislation on topics that are considered to affect women more than men, such as policies regarding birth control, abortion, child care, etc. (MacDonald and O'Brien 2011; Swers 2002; Wolbrecht 2002). In other words, this research provides empirical evidence that substantive representation is not feasible without descriptive representation. Swers (2005) summarises her findings by claiming that when women have access to positions of power, they become more active advocates of policy initiatives on women's health, children and families, and education than men in similar positions. Therefore, having male representatives only is likely to lead to "overlooked" interests, referring to women having interests that are different to those of men (i.e. issues related to child care, combining family and work life, etc. as discussed above).

A recent quasi-experimental study by MacDonald and O'Brien (2011) provides perhaps the most refined empirical support to the link between women's descriptive and substantive representation. MacDonald and O'Brien (2011) rightly point out that the majority of past research has yielded potentially biased estimates of the effect of sex because when modelling the effect of sex on representation, it has often omitted constituency variables. However, constituency level variables are not only likely to affect the character of legislators' decisions but may also be correlated with gender. By applying a quasi-experimental research design, MacDonald and O'Brien (2011) ensure that the influence of constituency is removed from the error term, and thus ensure that the estimates of the effects of gender are unbiased. As a result, their study shows more profound evidence that female legislators advance women's interests more frequently than their male congressional colleagues. Moreover, MacDonald and O'Brien's data also demonstrates the need for critical mass: "as the percentage of women in Congress increases, female

representatives are more likely to place women's interest on the agenda" (MacDonald and O'Brien 2011: 482). Thus, in order to assure substantive representation of women, women must have relatively high levels of descriptive representation.

The main idea behind acknowledging the links between different dimensions of representation is that not only what the representatives do but who they are matters. The argument for descriptive representation is, thus, that group representation is the tool which allows historically excluded groups, such as women, to get their issues, perspectives, and interests, which have been previously ignored, onto the political agenda (Sapiro 1981).

Moreover, Krook (2010: 155) argues that it is not only scholars that consider descriptive representation important but citizens, too. While scholars emphasise the link between descriptive and substantive representation, citizens have a stronger sense of symbolic representation when "people like them" are present in elected institutions. Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler's (2005) global study supports this argument as both men and women respondents believe that government is more democratic when more women are elected. Moreover, Richard Fenno's extensive study of congressmen revealed that most people have an intuitive feeling about the kind of politicians they want to represent them. It works the other way around, too: many legislators work very hard to identify with their constituents and to connect with them at a personal level (Fenno 1978).

However, more feminist-oriented literature on women's representation claims that not just any woman is a good representative of women (Celis and Childs 2008; Curtin 2008; Dovi 2002; Murray 2008). While this research has less confidence in the direct link between descriptive and substantive representation, it nevertheless agrees that the presence of women in a legislature is a necessary precondition for greater substantive representation (Dovi 2002: 731).

It is, thus, worth repeating that contemporary scholars agree that in order to increase women's substantive representation, that policy decisions also take into consideration women's interest and views, some degree of descriptive representation is necessary. I would take this argument further and agree with Mansbridge's (1999) claim that if women are politically such a heterogeneous group more women are needed in elected office to ensure that these different voices of different women are heard in the public realm.

This is the reason why this thesis concentrates on descriptive representation of women as it is the most essential and also the most easily measurable dimension of representation. Since the main aim of the thesis is to explain women's representation cross-nationally, the theoretical section continues by discussing the main institutional, party, and individual level predictors of women's descriptive representation.

## **2.2 Predictors of women's descriptive representation**

Previous research identifies a range of variables that affect women's descriptive representation. As the number of women elected to legislative bodies in different countries varies substantially, a large majority of past research has explained the election of women with institutional and contextual variables.

As can be seen in Table 2.1, past studies have most often examined how the level of proportionality and district magnitude of the electoral system influences the proportion of women elected to legislative bodies (see for example, Caul 1999; Darcy et al. 1994; Hogan 2001; Matland and Studlar 1996; Norris 1996; Norris and Franklin 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Studlar and Welch 1991; Tripp and Kang 2008). Furthermore, the type of voting system applied in PR list systems (preferential

/ non-preferential voting) has been found to explain the share of women in legislatures (Jones 2009; Matland 2005; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Schmidt 2009). Tripp and Kang's (2008) study shows how electoral rules are the single most important predictor of women's descriptive representation in advanced democracies. The impact of different types of candidate gender quotas has received growing scholarly attention, too (see for example, Caul 1999; Caul 2001; Jones 2009; Tripp and Kang 2008). Also the general context in which women run for office in terms of the levels of overall gender equality, has been identified by previous research as an important predictor of women's descriptive representation (Jones 2009; Matland 2005; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Tripp and Kang 2008).

Besides the aforementioned institutional and contextual variables, a few scholars have also studied women's descriptive representation at party level to understand how party level variables influence the election of women. Miki Caul's (1999) novel study, which treats party as the unit of analysis, provides perhaps the most complete picture how party ideology, centralisation, institutionalisation, and the share of women in party elites affect women's descriptive representation.

Table 2.1 summarises these major findings of previous literature and specifies for each main variable the articles and books that found a positive effect, conditional effect, and / or no significant effect on women's descriptive representation. While the positive effect of high levels of gender equality on women's representation have found extensive empirical support, the effect of the proportionality of the electoral system, openness of the ballot structure (preference / non-preference voting), and candidate quotas are more conditional (see Table 2.1). In fact, many scholars find that the effect of candidate quotas is conditioned by other electoral rules, such as the level of proportionality or the openness of

the ballot structure (Jones 2009; Schmidt 2009; Tripp and Kang 2008). These findings thus suggest that quotas are more efficient under certain electoral rules than others. As this thesis is interested in these types of interactive effects, I will revisit this issue in section 2.3.4 of this Chapter. Furthermore, the effect of some institutional variables, such as district magnitude and party ideology, are even more questionable as some scholars (see for example, Darcy et al. 1994; Matland 2005) fail to find any significant relationships between these variables and women's descriptive representation. Therefore, as Table 2.1 shows, not all scholars find similar effects in terms of how the aforementioned variables affect the election of women. This is why the next sections of the Chapter discuss in detail how and why I expect the variables listed in Table 2.1 to influence women's individual electoral chances. Moreover, I pay special attention to (i) at which stage of the election the variables listed in Table 2.1 are likely to influence women's electoral chances, and (ii) what explains the mechanisms behind the effects.

**Table 2.1: Institutional and contextual predictors of women's descriptive representation**

	SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP	CONDITIONAL POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP	NO SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP
Electoral rules: degree of proportionality	Caul 1999 (12 industrialised democracies);  Matland and Studlar 1996 (Canada and Norway);  Norris 1996 (47 democracies);  Norris and Franklin 1997 (12 EU member states);  Paxton and Kunovich 2003 (46 democracies);  Reynolds 1999 (180 national parliaments);  Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005 (31 democracies);  Tripp and Kang 2008 (153 countries).	Matland 2005 (24 industrialised and 16 less developed countries): proportionality of electoral system is a strong predictor in industrialised democracies but not significant in less developed countries.	
Electoral rules: district magnitude	Hogan 2001 (USA, 50 state legislatures);  Norris 1996 (47 democracies);  Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005 (31 democracies).	Darcy et al. 1994 (USA);  Studlar and Welch 1991 (UK);  Norris and Franklin 1997 (12 EU member states).	
Electoral rules: closed lists voting (non-preferential)	Caul 1999 (12 industrialised democracies);  Matland 2005 (24 industrialised	Jones 2009 (19 Latin American countries): general effect is weak but closed lists with placement mandates (quotas) significantly increase women's descriptive	

	SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP	CONDITIONAL POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP	NO SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP
	democracies);  Norris 1996 (47 democracies);  Paxton and Kunovich 2003 (46 democracies).	representation;  Schmidt 2009 (54 predominant list PR systems): effect mediated by gender quotas.	
Electoral rules: candidate quotas	Caul 1999 (12 industrialised democracies);  Caul 2001	Jones 2009 (19 Latin American countries): legislative quotas not effective; placement mandates and voluntary party quotas more effective, especially in combination with closed list voting system;  Tripp and Kang 2008 (153 countries): quotas matter but more in semi-democracies and authoritarian regimes than in advanced democracies. Type of quotas matters, too.	
Political parties: left ideology	Caul 1999 (12 industrialised democracies);  Norris and Franklin 1997 (12 EU member states);  Reynolds 1999 (180 national parliaments).		Matland 2005 (24 industrialised democracies).
Political parties: centralisation			Caul 1999 (12 industrialised democracies).
Political parties: institutionalisation	Caul 1999 (12 industrialised democracies).		
Political parties: share of women in	Caul 1999 (12 industrialised		

	SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP	CONDITIONAL POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP	NO SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP
party elites	democracies).		
Context: overall gender equality	<p>Jones 2009 (19 Latin American countries);</p> <p>Matland 2005 (24 industrialised and 16 less developed countries);</p> <p>Paxton and Kunovich 2003 (46 democracies);</p> <p>Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005 (31 democracies);</p> <p>Tripp and Kang 2008 (153 countries).</p>		

I argue that one of the reasons why different scholars with different samples find varying effects is because these studies have not controlled for individual and/or party level variables that are likely to matter, too. For example, it is unreasonable to expect that all female candidates in all countries that employ proportional representation are similar to one another. To the contrary, research on female candidacy suggests that women differ not only from each other but also from male candidates in terms of political experience, political ambition, and party-determined viability (electoral list placement in PR list systems and constituency placement in majority / plurality systems) (Lawless and Fox 2005; Lawless and Pearson 2008; Ryan et al. 2010), the effects of which may well be conditioned by the wider institutional and contextual setting. Moreover, I claim in this thesis that these individual level variables are likely to interact with the context in which women run, which is why it is necessary to apply an individual level approach in a cross-national setting to fully explain the mechanisms behind the election of women.

### **2.3 What affects women candidates' chances for electoral success?**

In order to build on the existing knowledge of the determinants of women's representation, identified by past research (see Table 2.1), I proceed by discussing in detail the major past findings and explaining my expectations of how these variables may affect individual candidates' electoral success. I will also address how certain party and country level variables may intervene or interact with individual level variables. Past research has had to miss these possible intervening and interaction effects due to the lack of individual level data.

### *2.3.1 First, it takes a candidate*

This thesis studies in depth the process from female candidacy to a female representative in order to better understand the conditions under which high levels of women's descriptive representation are more likely. In this research, I emphasise the role of viable female candidacy as a precondition for having a female representative. I claim in this thesis that women do not only need to be candidates but viable candidates (who have an actual chance of winning) in order to assure their election. As the field is lacking individual level data, past research offers little insight into this type of competitive female candidacy. However, there are some studies that explain female candidacy in general.

Norris and Lovenduski (1995), for example, identify two key factors that explain the supply of female candidates: (1) their *access to resources*, like money, experience, and time; and (2) their *political motivation*, like general interest in politics and political ambition. Lawless and Fox (2005) point out similar predictors of female candidacy and pay special attention to the gender gap in political ambition as the main determinant of the decision to run for political office. They call it the “gendered psyche” which does not allow many women to run for elective position because they doubt their ability to thrive in the political sphere (Lawless and Fox 2005: 149). Therefore, their research suggests that political ambition interacts with sex.

But if there are differences in women's and men's levels of political ambition, this variable is likely not only to affect one's likelihood of becoming a candidate, but also the process from a candidate to an elected representative. For example, it is likely that a politically more ambitious party member stands a higher chance of being appointed by party gatekeepers as a viable candidate. More ambitious candidates are also likely to campaign harder and attract more media coverage, both of which should increase the

likelihood of getting elected. Thus, if women party members (but also female candidates) have lower levels of political ambition than men, then we can expect sex to interact with political ambition when affecting women's likelihood of electoral success. Furthermore, this also suggests that part of the reason why women fare worse than men lies with women themselves. This is also a stand-point that Lawless and Fox (2005) take in their book and Krook (2010: 159) has summarised by claiming that Lawless and Fox's study (2005) indicates that "the impetus for change must come from women themselves".

Another powerful predictor of candidacy is *inc incumbency*. But similarly to political ambition, incumbency, too, is likely to affect the process from a candidate to an elected representative in several stages. Incumbent office holders and other party members with extensive political experiences at the party, local, or national level are on average more likely to be favoured in the eyes of the parties, media, and the voters (Matland and Studlar 1998; Ondercin and Welch 2009). I hypothesise that it is easier for candidates with extensive political experience to win the support of the party gatekeepers when fielding viable candidates, to receive more media attention, and to appeal to the voters because their (positive) political "track-record" is likely to assure all the aforementioned parties of their competence and suitability for the elected office. Therefore, extensive political experience should not only help a politician to become a candidate, but also increase her likelihood of being ranked in a highly viable list position by a political party and in turn increase her likelihood of being elected. Such expectations are also supported by previous literature which provides consistent evidence that incumbent office holders have an advantage in the electoral process (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Matland and Studlar 1998; Ondercin and Welch 2009; Welch and Studlar 1996).

But like political ambition, incumbency and political experience are likely to interact with candidate's sex. In fact, some scholars claim that one reason why women find it hard to increase their descriptive representation is because women are less likely to enjoy the incumbency advantage than men (Schwindt-Bayer 2005; Studlar and McAllister 1991; Welch and Studlar 1990; Welch and Studlar 1996). When the large majority of incumbents are men, as is the case in most national legislatures, incumbency emerges as a male advantage that could hinder women's electoral outlooks (Schwindt-Bayer 2005: 227). Moreover, incumbency not only interacts with candidate sex but also with electoral rules and the overall gender ideology<sup>1</sup>. Schwindt-Bayer (2005) demonstrates that more proportional electoral systems with higher district magnitude limit the incumbency advantage and thus make room for more women to win office. She also finds that party-level gender quotas help women attain a larger proportion of legislative seats (Schwindt-Bayer 2005: 240). This makes incumbency and political experience in general interesting variables to look at in the current thesis, too.

### *2.3.2 Second, it takes the support of the party gatekeepers*

A wide body of research on women's descriptive representation concentrates on the role political parties play in determining how many women candidates are running for office and how many of them have a chance of becoming elected (Caul 1999; Krook 2010; Nieven 1998; Reynolds 1999). These studies conclude that political parties "are the real gatekeepers to elected office" (Caul 1999: 80). Different scholars concentrate on a variety of party and party system characteristics when examining women's descriptive

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<sup>1</sup> With the overall gender ideology I understand the values and attitudes the society has towards the role of women combined with the actual role of women in the given society.

representation, such as party ideology, level of centralisation, level of institutionalisation, location of candidate nomination, party system fragmentation, and adoption of formal candidate gender quotas (Caul 1999).

In this thesis, I aim to explain why women have varying electoral chances, and thus enjoy different levels of descriptive representation, in different institutional settings. I expect that *party-determined candidate viability*, her *electoral list placement in PR list systems*, is an overlooked variable in the current literature. I argue that the starting position given to individual candidates by party (her electoral list placement in PR list systems) does not only explain women candidates' electoral success directly but also indirectly. For example, party determined candidate viability is likely to interact with her news media visibility and thereby have an interaction effect on the likelihood of electoral success. Or female candidate's party determined viability may vary in different electoral systems, suggesting that the effect of party-determined candidate viability is moderated by the electoral rules.

The literature dealing with women's underrepresentation in the United States reports that primary elections in the US are not gender equal (Lawless and Pearson 2008). Ryan et al. (2010) find that also in the UK Conservative Party's female candidates, more often than men, have to run in hopeless races. It is the district in which a candidate runs that matters in single-member districts. In PR list systems, it is the candidate's ranking in electoral lists that determines to a large extent her viability. I assume, based on the studies reporting gender bias in candidate selection in majority / plurality systems, that similar bias is possible in PR list systems, too.

While in majority / plurality systems the gender bias in candidate selection results in women running more often than men in constituencies where their party has no chance of

winning, in PR list systems similar gender bias would occur if parties systematically rank women lower in electoral lists than men. There are on average more women in elected positions in PR list systems compared to majority / plurality systems. However, like in majority / plurality systems, in countries that employ proportional representation, the majority of party gatekeepers are men and the system in which women have to gain support for their candidacy is developed and institutionalised by men. Therefore, it is likely that an individual candidate's party-determined viability may vary by sex in the latter case, too.

I also expect women candidates' party-determined viability to partially explain why previous aggregate level studies find that women's descriptive representation is higher in more gender-equal societies and under certain electoral rules (i.e. PR list systems, and closed list voting systems). Valdini (2012) argues that party gatekeepers "anticipate voter behaviour to be affected by the form of electoral system, and systematically respond by changing their candidate selection strategies to match." Therefore, the reason why women fare worse in some electoral systems compared to others is because the cost of not fielding enough women in viable electoral list positions is lower under certain electoral rules. As the proportion of (viable) female candidates varies in different institutional settings due to the party gatekeepers' anticipation of voter behaviour, so in turn does the proportion of women among elected representatives. Furthermore, Valdini (2012) also claims that party gatekeepers not only anticipate the electoral rules when selecting candidates, but also the prevalent gender norms. In other words, the electoral risk of running a high number of (viable) female candidates is anticipated by party gatekeepers as higher in societies with traditional gender norms compared to more liberal gender norms. I will return to discussing how party-determined candidate viability is likely to interact with wider institutional and contextual settings in Section 2.3.4.

It is evident that in order to understand the mechanisms behind why women enjoy higher levels of descriptive representation under certain institutional and contextual settings we need to apply an individual level approach to consider variables like party-determined candidate viability in our models. This enables the researcher to account more fully for the power that party gatekeepers play in influencing the election of women.

Another party level variable that will be further investigated in the empirical chapters of the thesis is ideology. *Political ideologies* are not gender neutral. Therefore, it has led many scholars to question if parties with certain ideologies are more prone to support female candidature. The main assumption is that left-wing parties are more likely to support women's candidacies because they promote more egalitarian ideologies than right-wing parties (Duverger 1955). Lovenduski and Norris (1993), however, question the appropriateness of such an assumption in modern politics. They argue that left-wing parties may no longer be the only ones supporting women as the support for having more women in politics is likely to have spread across the ideological spectrum. Matland (1998) reports that the proportion of seats held by right-wing parties does not predict the percentage of female MPs in industrialised democracies (see Table 2.1). However, Norris and Franklin (1997) provide contrary empirical evidence: the stronger the left-wing parties are in a political system, the more women are elected to the European Parliament. Reynolds (1999) study supports these results. He reports the electoral strength of left-wing parties in the system to be one of the strongest significant predictors of the number of women MPs (Reynolds 1999: 567).

Miki Caul's study that does not use a political system as a unit of analysis – but, rather, a political party – also provides empirical evidence that parties on the left have a higher share of women parliamentary representatives than the parties on the right, while

environmental and communist parties average the highest proportion of women (Caul 1999: 85). Moreover, her study also reveals that ideology did not play a stronger role in the 1970s than it did in the late 1980s (Caul 1999), indicating no support for Lovenduski and Norris' initial assumption that over time all parties have adopted gender-equal ideology.

However, it is important to question whether party ideology affects women's (viable) candidacy or their likelihood for electoral success. While a left-wing party may be more likely to field more female candidates than a right-wing party, it does not necessarily result in more women in the parliament as these left-wing parties may, in some countries, attract less votes than right-wing parties. Moreover, there is also a lack of empirical tests reporting that left-wing parties systematically place women on higher electoral list positions, and thus increase women's likelihood of getting elected, than do right-wing parties. Therefore, in the empirical chapters of this thesis, I will revisit the possible impact of party ideology on the election of women.

In sum, it is evident that political parties possess enormous power and discretion over candidate selection procedures which in turn affect women's electoral chances and their overall descriptive representation. However, besides parties there are other factors that can affect women's electoral outlooks, too.

### *2.3.3 Third, it takes the support of the news media*

Besides, applying a unique individual level approach, this thesis also aims to combine two separate bodies of literature when explaining cross-national differences in the election of women. I argue in the thesis, that the current literature explaining cross-national differences in women's representation has paid considerable attention to electoral systems and political parties and their candidate recruitment strategies while ignored the mediating

role of the news media. At the same time, the literature that discusses women candidates' underrepresentation in the news media has not, on the other hand, paid much attention to the electoral consequences the media bias may produce or to the mechanisms that cause this bias. The current thesis argues that in order to have greater insight into why women win elected offices more easily in some countries compared to others, it is necessary to combine these two bodies of literature because institutions – such as media and parties – are not independent from one another.

A significant amount of scholarly attention has been paid to how media discriminates against female candidates when covering election campaigns (i.e. Banducci et al. 2007; Bystrom et al. 2001; Gidengil and Everitt 2000; Heldman et al. 2005; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Kahn 1994a). The question that has not received much attention is, however, if media independently discriminate or are just reinforcing the gender ideology of the parties and the society in general. Therefore, the aim of the current thesis is to establish the relationship between the news media, political parties, and the wider institutional and contextual setting, and the way these different level actors intervene and interact when affecting women's electoral chances.

Previous studies indicate that different candidates enjoy different levels of news media coverage (i.e. Bystrom et al. 2001; Heldman et al. 2005; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). These differences are attributed to a number of factors, such as the incumbency of a candidate and campaign funding, but also to the gender of the candidate (i.e. Kahn and Goldeberg 1991; Kahn 2003). Scholars of election studies report that female candidates receive relatively less news media coverage than their male counterparts. Moreover, it is not only the amount of coverage that varies but also the type of stories in which women and men candidates appear, and the tone of the coverage they receive (i.e. Bystrom et al. 2001;

Gidengil and Everitt 2000; Heldman et al. 2005; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Kahn 1994a).

But most interestingly, a recent study by Banducci and her colleagues shows that the gender gap in media coverage of candidates also varies cross-nationally, with countries like Austria, France, and Spain showing a greater bias of media coverage against women candidates than countries like Sweden and Denmark (Banducci et al. 2007). These previous studies, however, have mostly concentrated on describing the media bias of candidate coverage and hypothesised about the possible implications it might have for overall electoral process, while largely ignoring the factors that explain this very bias itself.

In the previous section (2.3.2), I explained the important role that party gatekeepers play in fielding (viable) female candidates and thereby either facilitating or hindering women's overall descriptive representation. This argument can be extended by claiming that party gatekeepers not only affect individual candidates' electoral chances directly but also indirectly through the media coverage that ensues. Candidates who have a fair chance of winning the office are also likely to attract media attention, while candidates who are positioned at the bottom of the party's election list are more likely to be obscure to news media coverage. Thus, candidate viability and her news media visibility may interact when predicting women candidates' likelihood of winning an elected office.

The main reason behind the expectation that media coverage influences electoral outcomes is that media influence what voters know about candidates and if media cover different candidates in a different way, then media treatment is likely to have consequences for both voter information and candidate preferences (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991, Kahn 2003). If, for example, women are placed on electoral lists less favorably than men, these unfavorable election list rankings are likely to obscure women from media attention, and from voters, too.

Candidates who receive more attention in the news media are more easily recognisable to their potential voters and hence have higher chances of becoming elected. Banducci and her colleagues (2007) report in their study that the visibility of female candidates, rather than just the mere presence of them, influences the electoral process. Without being visible, female candidates have little impact on the overall mass political engagement, including voter turnout among the female electorate (Banducci et al. 2007). In other words, the presence of women candidates can fully be brought to the attention of voters only by being covered in the news media during the campaign. In order to become elected voters need to recognise the candidates. However, since variations in the amount of media coverage can influence recognition rates (Goldenberg and Traugott 1987), gender bias in news media attention may result in considerable electoral consequences. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that news media coverage of female candidates is a likely predictor and mediator of the party-determined viability variable when predicting women candidates' electoral success and women's descriptive representation in general.

#### *2.3.4 How institutional and contextual settings condition individual, party, and media effects*

Besides the individual, party, and media level variables affecting women's (viable) candidacy and electoral success discussed above, a number of institutional factors are likely to affect and/or mediate the election of women. Previous literature on women's descriptive representation acknowledges the role of electoral rules, party institutions and characteristics, and overall gender equality as affecting the election of women.

### *Proportional representation and high district magnitude*

As past research shows, certain institutional designs help to reduce the gender gap in descriptive representation while others facilitate the status quo (i.e. Caul 1999; Darcy et al. 1994; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Schmidt 2009; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). This literature provides consistent empirical evidence that both women's candidacy and representation are not immune to the features of the electoral system. For example, many scholars show that women have higher levels of descriptive representation in countries that employ proportional representation compared to plurality / majority systems (see for example, Caul 1999; Darcy et al. 1994; Hogan 2001; Matland and Studlar 1998; Norris 1996; Norris and Franklin 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Reynolds 1999; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005).

Matland's study (1998) is the only one to show some mixed results. He finds that the proportionality of an electoral system is a significant predictor of women's descriptive representation in industrialised democracies only while in less developed countries the impact of electoral system is insignificant (Matland 1998). In a way these results do not contradict the rest of the research but rather point to other contextual variables, e.g. the level of development, that may modify the impact of the proportionality of the electoral system on women's representation. In other words, factors that influence women's representation in advanced industrialised democracies do not always work in the same fashion in less developed countries with democratic regimes (Matland 1998).

The possible impact that district magnitude (the number of seats per district) has on women's descriptive representation is less established. Studies that have concentrated on the United States, United Kingdom and 12 "old" EU member states find little evidence of the impact of district magnitude (Darcy et al. 1994; Norris and Franklin 1997; Studlar and

Welch 1991), while more recent research that uses larger samples provide some evidence that women have higher chances of winning an elected office in electoral districts with a greater number of seats (Hogan 2001; Norris 1996; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). It is important to note that the level of proportionality and district magnitudes applied in an electoral system are linked to each other. PR list systems usually employ multi-member districts where more than one candidate can be elected from a particular district, whereas plurality-majority systems employ single-member districts. Therefore, due to the multi-collinearity of these two variables, some of the variance explained by district magnitude could be attributed to the proportionality of the electoral systems.

But why do women enjoy greater electoral success in countries that employ proportional representation with high district magnitude compared to single-member district majority / plurality systems? In PR list systems, parties tend to balance their ticket to attract more voters and to avoid internal party disputes between different factions of the party (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Matland and Studlar 1996; Matland 2005), and thus run more women in their lists. In single-member districts where one person carries the party banner it is impossible to balance the ticket, while in proportional systems with multi-member districts parties may be more inclined to do so in order to appeal to a broader and more diverse portion of the electorate (Matland and Studlar 1996). Therefore, “the perceived electoral risk with a female candidate decreases when a female is part of a group, rather than the sole candidate” (Caul 1999: 84). In contrast, in plurality-majority systems parties are faced with zero-sum contests where they must make a choice between female and male candidates rather than being able to place both on the ticket (Kunovich and Paxton 2005).

Sawer (2000) also points out that a proportional electoral system makes it much easier to introduce candidate gender quotas than majoritarian systems where only one place is to be filled. Quotas in return increase women's descriptive representation (Caul 2001). Besides agreeing with these assumptions, I also suggest that proportional multi-member districts give greater chances for new candidates relative to incumbents as the cost of having them run is lower: in a winner-take-all system it is much more costly to risk new, and especially non-traditional, candidates than in systems where relative losers are treated more fairly. Therefore, as long as women candidates remain a novelty, electoral systems that put less emphasis on individual incumbency provide in general a better structure of opportunity for women to enjoy electoral success.

Previous research, thus, provides consistent empirical evidence that women benefit from proportional electoral systems. However, there are large variations in the proportion of women elected to different legislative bodies in countries that all employ multi-member district proportional electoral systems. As noted earlier, the share of women among elected MPs in different PR list systems varies from less than 10 per cent in Hungary to over 40 per cent in Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden. We know that PR list systems not only differ from each other in terms of district magnitude but also in terms of whether parties or voters decide the division of the seats awarded to a party. Several scholars claim that the particular voting system (i.e. closed list voting vs. preferential voting) employed in PR list systems can affect the election of women, too, as both parties and candidates are likely to behave differently in different voting systems (Katz 1980).

### *Openness of the ballot structure (preference and non-preference voting systems)*

The openness of the ballot structure in PR list systems (preference or non-preference voting), has received less scholarly attention in the literature on women's descriptive representation. As past research has more often than not treated PR list systems as homogenous, we have somewhat limited knowledge of what drives the differences in women's representation across PR list systems and what role the openness of ballot structure has on the election of women.

While several early works regarded preferential voting via open or ordered list ballot structure as a favourable factor for women's representation (Shugart 1994; Taagepera 1994), more recent research provides empirical evidence that closed lists are more advantageous for the election of women in PR list systems (Caul 1999; Htun 2002; Htun 2005; Matland 2005; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003).

However, some scholars find the effect of the openness of the ballot structure to be more conditional. Schmidt (2009) claims that ballot structure itself does not explain women's representation but suggests that women fare better in closed list voting systems due to the fact that quotas and placement mandates work more efficiently in these systems. Jones (2009) finds that women have higher levels of descriptive representation in closed list systems than open list systems. He also provides empirical evidence that the effect of closed lists is the strongest when well-designed quotas (i.e. placement mandates) are in place (Jones 2009). However, all the analysis, similarly to other previous research, is based on aggregate level data, which has forced the scholars to ignore individual level variables and other possible mechanisms explaining why women fare worse in preference voting systems compared to closed list systems. This conventional approach may have

overestimated the impact of institutions while discounting the role of party gatekeepers and media in explaining individual candidates' electoral chances.

In this thesis, I aim to address this issue by paying special attention to how different voting systems that are used with proportional representation condition the election of women. As this is a largely unexplored area in the research on women's representation and, thus, the central part of this thesis, I will come back to the exact expectations of the direct and indirect effect of voting systems on women's electoral success in the final part of the Chapter (Section 2.4.1).

Besides the aforementioned, there are also different specific institutional measures to foster descriptive representation of traditionally disadvantaged groups, such as employing reserved seats and candidate quotas.

### *Gender quotas*

Both states and political parties have the ability to increase women's descriptive representation by creating formal rules that prescribe a certain share of women among the candidates. Broadly speaking, there are two main types of formal rules that can facilitate the representation of historically disadvantaged groups: reserved seats and candidate quotas. Htun (2004) argues that the former are more appropriate tool for societal subgroups that overlap with partisan affiliations while quotas are more suitable for identities that tend to cut throughout party lines. As women are spread across the party system they often demand and are granted candidate quotas rather than reserved legislative seats. The basic idea behind candidate quotas is to "attack the discrimination suffered by individuals within parties to give them a better chance of getting elected" (Htun 2004: 450).

Many parties in industrialised democracies and some countries' electoral laws have established gender quotas ever since their first appearance in the 1970s. The main aim of establishing these quotas was to increase women's descriptive representation. Therefore, it is justified to expect a relationship between candidate quotas and the share of women in elected offices. Empirical research also provides evidence of such a linkage: party candidate quotas have a strong, though lagged effect on the percentage of women MPs. This means that the rules adopted have an impact only after the first elections following the introduction of quotas (Caul 1999: 90).

However, a question that also needs to be addressed is why certain parties and countries adopt candidate quotas while others do not. Only when we know the answer to this question can we judge whether candidate quotas produce higher levels of female representation or are the factors influencing the adoption of quotas that actually explain differences in women's representation. Miki Caul's original study (2001: 1226) suggests that leftist parties and parties with a greater number of women among the party's highest decision-making body are the most likely to introduce candidate quotas. She sees these two factors inter-linked as left-wing parties tend to have, on average, more women among the party hierarchy. Therefore, we come back to party ideology and the composition of party elites as important predictors of women's descriptive representation. However, leftist ideology and party quotas may not explain the same part of the variance. Caul's research also argues that once one party (usually leftist) adopts candidate quotas it triggers a process of contagion where other parties with different ideological positions follow their example (Caul 2001: 1226).

Also more recent literature on the global impact of candidate quotas supports the assumption that quotas are an important mechanism through which women are entering

legislatures worldwide (Jones 2009, Tripp and Kang 2008). However, this research finds the effect of quotas to be more conditional. Tripp and Kang (2008) find that quotas with placement mandates are the most effective, while general legislative quotas appear the least efficient measure to increase women's descriptive representation. Their results also show that quotas are a stronger predictor in semi-democracies and autocracies while in democracies general features of the electoral system are more powerful predictors than candidate quotas (Tripp and Kang 2008). Also Jones (2009) concludes that not all quotas are effective. His study covering 19 Latin American countries suggests that only well-designed quotas which include placement mandate regulations together with a closed list voting system are effective, while quotas without placement mandate regulations have weaker or no effects in preference voting systems (Jones 2009). Substantively, Jones' (2009) and Tripp and Kang's (2008) results suggest that the effectiveness of candidate quotas is likely to be conditioned by candidate viability. The aim of placement mandates is to assure that candidates of different sex are placed equally throughout the entire electoral list, meaning that women have as high chances of being a viable candidate as men. Therefore, candidate quotas can increase not only the share of women among candidates but also women's chances for electoral success and greater descriptive representation if they assure that women are placed in viable list positions.

At the same time, it is also debatable at which stages of the election of women candidate quotas have the strongest effect. In this thesis I assume that candidate quotas are primarily a measure to increase the proportion of women among candidates. As explained above, without effective placement mandates, it is less clear how candidate quotas could increase women's chances for viable candidacy, extensive news media coverage during the

campaign, and finally electoral success. For clarity, I will revisit the expected effect of candidate quotas in each of the empirical chapters.

#### *Overall gender equality and support for feminist attitudes*

Besides the aforementioned institutional variables, literature on women's descriptive representation also discusses more general socio-cultural contextual variables. In fact, one could argue that many of the electoral system or party level effects are in fact spurious. The reason why in some countries more often than in others (i) political parties position both women and men as their top candidates, (ii) media cover female and male candidates more equally, and (iii) more women are elected into legislative bodies can simply be an expression of *overall gender equality* in the society.

First, women are more likely to enter the political landscape and become candidates where they have the same access as men to higher education and have high levels of labour market participation (Hogan 2001; Matland 1998; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). The main argument to support this hypothesis is that the higher women's ranking is in the society (the more they participate in higher education and are in the labour market) the more likely it is that women obtain the necessary skills needed to enter and be successful in the political environment. Therefore, the more gender equal the society is the higher the chances for women (a) to become candidates, and also (b) to translate their candidacy into an elected seat as they possess the necessary skills and resources for electoral competition.

Second, in a more gender equal society women candidates are also more likely to be placed on higher list positions by parties, thus, increasing their viability and likelihood of being elected. Valdini (2012) shows with her data that the share of women among candidates is higher in more gender equal countries. She thus argues that party gatekeepers

anticipate the prevalent gender norms when selecting candidates. In this thesis, I go further by claiming that in more gender-equal countries parties also have higher incentives to place women in more viable electoral list positions than in less gender-equal societies. I base this argument on the assumption that party gatekeepers are likely to perceive a higher risk of being punished by voters for casting a list where women are deferred to low positions only in a society where women in general are more equal to men. Paxton and Kunovich (2003) support this assumption by claiming that the overall gender ideology is likely to influence political party elites' decisions when supporting female candidates (Paxton and Kunovich 2003).

Third, in countries where women participate more in the labour force, get paid more equally with men, and have more political and social power than in other countries, the news media are also likely to treat female candidates more equally. In societies where women and men are more equal, there might not only be an ideological demand for more gender equal media coverage of candidates, but there may also be more women working in the media system. Scholarly work concentrating on gender bias in media coverage also suggest that media tend to cover both sexes more equally in cases where there are higher levels of gender equality among media personnel (Schudson 2002).

Fourth, it is likely that voters are more open to support female candidacy in more gender equal societies, too, because in such countries political office is considered as suitable for women as for men. Also, previous research supports the idea that women candidates do better in more women-friendly constituencies (Ondercin and Welch 2009; Welch and Studlar 1996).

In conclusion, overall gender equality may not only affect women's electoral chances directly but also indirectly through viability, media coverage, and voter preferences.

Therefore, this thesis includes a measure of overall gender equality in all empirical chapters of the thesis.

### *2.3.5 Summary of previous findings*

Previous literature suggests that the presence of women in policy-making bodies makes a difference. The fact that an elected body where there are more women is not only more policy responsive to the female electorate, but that an institution that does not represent half of the population is considered unjust influences the regime's democratic legitimacy. A parliament that consists of white male representatives only does not reflect the diversity of the society not only in its looks but also in its policy responsiveness and the way voters perceive and evaluate it. Therefore, it is essential for democratic legitimacy and the quality of electoral democracy that political institutions, starting from parliaments, reflect the society's demographic composition.

However, the fact that different components of representation are highly interlinked makes women's political representation a complex process. The chain of representation starts from candidates: if no woman is running for political office then it is impossible for them to become elected. The candidate selection process is highly determined not only by electoral laws but also by the internal regulations of political parties which in return are likely to be influenced by the overall political culture and gender ideology. Therefore, institution and the context matter from the very beginning of the representative process.

Based on the discussion above, the thesis argues that the role of institutions and context does not end with the candidate selection process but continues throughout the electoral competition. How else can we explain why in some countries women candidates are more likely to become elected than in others? Therefore, the support from political

parties during the election period, the way news media cover candidates of different gender, as well as the willingness of the electorate to vote for women (overall gender ideology), all matter when it comes to women's individual electoral chances as well as to their descriptive representation in general.

## **2.4 Approach and central expectation of the thesis**

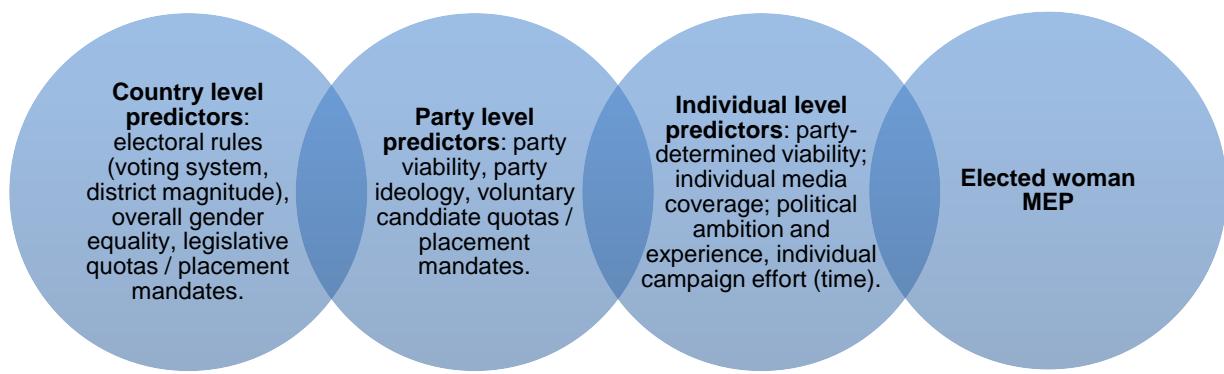
The literature covered above relies primarily either on aggregate level data or on data from a single election from a single country. While past research has helped us to understand some variables affecting women's descriptive representation, it has been impossible to tease out how individual, party, media, and country level factors condition the election of women. As a result, we may, for example, overestimate the role of electoral systems while discounting the role of party gatekeepers and the news media. In order to shed light on these mechanisms, a candidate level approach is necessary.

As this thesis is conducted at the level of the individual candidate, it is not only able to test the effects of individual level characteristics but also to establish whether individual, party, and institutional characteristics affect female candidates the same way as they do male candidates. In this thesis, I examine the election of women in 25 EU member states, which allows me to include in the research a number of country, party, and individual level variables. Figure 2.1 summarises the levels and specific variables that are likely to affect women candidates' chances for electoral success.

As shown on Figure 2.1, at the country level I will pay central attention to the effects of openness of the ballot structure (preferential / non-preferential voting) and overall gender equality on the election of women. I will also control for legislative quotas

(placement mandates). At the party level, the central variable of interest is party ideology, voluntary candidate quotas, and party's overall electoral viability. Some individual level predictors are strongly influenced by other level variables. For example, at the individual level I pay central attention to candidate's party-determined viability. While it is measured at the individual level, the variable is substantively influenced by party level decisions. In terms of media effects, I am primarily interested in what affects the amount of individual news media coverage a candidate receives and how that in turn affects her electoral chances. While this variable, too, is measured at an individual level, it describes what is happening at another (media) level. At the individual level, I also control for candidate's political ambition, political experience, and individual campaign effort (time spent campaigning).

**Figure 2.1: Levels of variables**

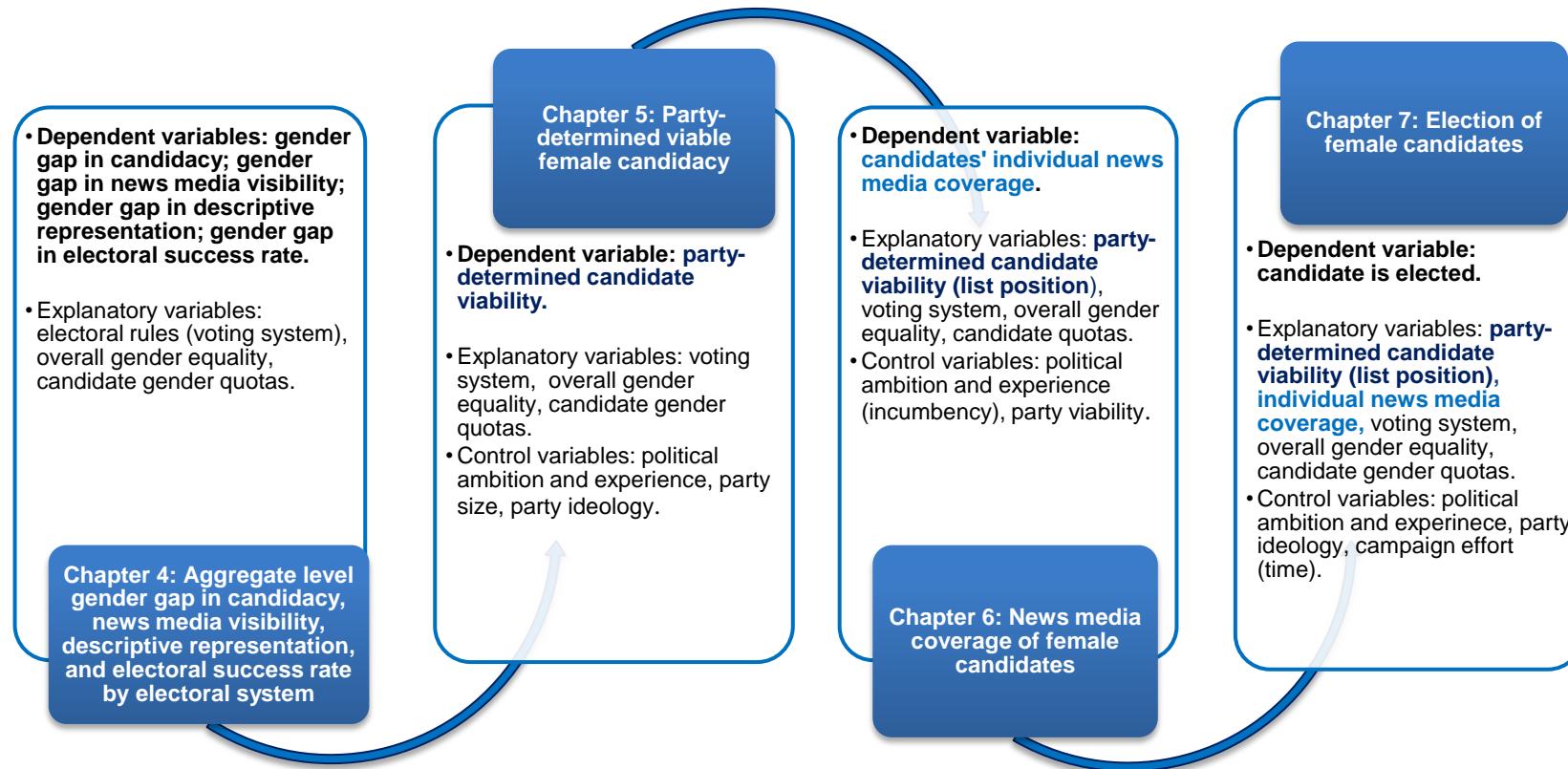


Besides the levels at which different variables affect women's electoral success, I also distinguish three important "moments" that affect an individual candidate's likelihood of progressing from a candidate to an elected representative: (i) party gatekeepers' decision to place a candidate on a viable or non-viable electoral list position; (ii) candidate's success

in gaining news media coverage and thus being visible to the voters during the campaign period, and (iii) the actual election of candidates. Therefore, the thesis not only studies the outcome of the Election Day but covers the process from candidate to elected representative more thoroughly. The empirical part of the thesis is built up around these three stages, as illustrated in Figure 2.2.

While this thesis cannot study candidate selection in a traditional sense (due to the lack of appropriate data), it studies why some candidates are placed by political parties in more competitive starting position (electoral list ranking) than others (see Chapter 5 on Figure 2.2). I also test if individual, party, and institutional characteristics similarly affect both female and male candidates' chances of being a highly viable candidate. As shown in Figure 2.2, the next stage of this research studies at the individual level female and male candidates' chances for news media coverage and how these chances are affected by the institutional and contextual setting (Chapter 6). In this part of the thesis, the previous dependent variable – candidate viability – is treated as an independent variable, explaining individual candidates' likelihood for receiving news media coverage. The final part of this thesis combines the findings from the two previous empirical chapters and utilises previous dependent variables – candidate viability and news media coverage - as explanatory variables in individual candidates' prospects for election (see Chapter 7 on Figure 2.2).

**Figure 2.2: Empirical chapters of the thesis**



#### *2.4.1. Central expectations of the thesis*

In section 2.3.4, I presented the findings of previous research on how the openness of the ballot structure may affect women's descriptive representation. While empirical evidence suggests that non-preference closed list voting systems are more advantageous for the election of women in PR list systems than preference voting (Caul 1999; Htun 2002; Htun 2005; Matland 2005; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003) it is less clear through which mechanisms the openness of ballot structure influences or conditions an individual candidate's electoral chances dependent on her sex. Therefore, I explain below the variety of PR list systems and how women candidates' electoral chances may vary under these different electoral rules.

#### *Why women fare better in closed list systems compared to preferential voting systems?*

In all PR list systems, voters are primarily presented with a choice between parties. However, in some cases voters can also choose between individual candidates that represent the party of their choice. The difference between these systems lies in whether the voting act is candidate-based or party-based (Bowler and Farrell 1993). Since this thesis' main interest is to investigate the variations in the election of women in different types of PR list systems, I herewith discuss different types of ballot structure employed within PR list electoral systems and how these different structures may affect women candidates' electoral chances.

This thesis distinguishes between two broad types of voting systems employed in PR list electoral systems. Systems where voters can only express their preference to a party and have to accept the party's preference in regard to which candidates should represent it in the legislature are called here *closed party list voting systems or systems with closed lists ballot structure*. On the other hand, systems where voters can choose

among the candidates of the same party and influence directly which candidate from their preferred party gets elected are called *preferential or preference voting systems*.

Therefore, the basic question is whether an electoral system allows voters to choose between parties, candidates, or both. In the case of *closed party list voting*, the votes pool to the level of the party and the choice of individual representatives depends on a list order determined by the party (Karvonen 2004). In the case of preferential voting, there are more varieties. Since this thesis is only interested in PR list systems, I will not discuss the single transferable vote system or alternative vote system, but will keep the focus on preference voting in PR list systems only.<sup>2</sup> Preferential voting in PR list systems can be divided into two broad categories: preference voting with *open list* and preference voting with *ordered list* ballot structure. These two types differ in terms of “the degree to which electoral systems reward politicians’ personal reputations” (Carey and Shugart 1995: 419). In the case of *open list preference voting*, preference votes are the sole bases on which individual representatives are chosen. In the case of *ordered list preference voting* list order determined by party gatekeepers together with preference votes determines the choice of individual legislators (Karvonen 2004). Therefore, in the latter case the decision of which individual candidates get elected is divided between parties and voters.

In this thesis, I argue that past research may have missed some important mechanisms of how electoral rules affect women’s representation by relying on aggregate level data only and by not distinguishing between different types of preference voting systems. In many real-life cases the choice of individual representatives does not rest solely with voters or with parties but the responsibility of electing individual legislators are divided between the two (in ordered list voting

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<sup>2</sup> Only Malta, Ireland, and the Northern Ireland constituency of the United Kingdom employ STV system for the election of representatives to the European Parliament. This provides too few cases (in total 21 respondents in the 2009 EES Candidate Survey data) to include them in the analysis.

systems). It is reasonable to expect that both parties and voters may behave differently dependent on the importance of their decision.

For example, party gatekeepers may select different types of candidates as viable candidates under different electoral rules (Hazan and Voerman 2006). This thesis takes the argument further by claiming that the combination of different electoral rules and candidate selection procedures affects the election of women, too. Parties may take into consideration elements, such as electability, representation, incumbency, and cohesion, to a different degree under varying electoral rules when producing their lists. Current literature offers little insight into how the combination of certain electoral rules and candidate selection procedures affect the election of women. As this gap in the literature is one of the main motivations of this thesis, I proceed by discussing in detail the expectations about viable candidacy across different voting systems.

Closed party lists put the responsibility on the political party to balance the representation of different demographics, interests, and groups among candidates. In such a system, different factions in the party, i.e. the women's faction, are likely to put pressure on party gatekeepers not only to include enough women in electoral lists but also to ensure women are in viable list positions. As list position determines everything in closed lists systems, it also means that these different factions within parties can hold party gatekeepers responsible for their dismal commitment to fielding female candidates and for impeding women's descriptive representation. As a result, in closed lists systems parties are likely not only to balance their party lists but also to balance the "viable" part of the list in order to appeal to different subgroups of voters. Moreover, candidate quotas are also reported to work better with closed lists than with open lists (Jones 2009; Tripp and Kang 2008). Since the voters cannot re-order the lists, initial quotas, especially with placement mandates, will deliver the maximum outcome. Therefore, I expect women to enjoy relatively competitive ranking in electoral lists in

countries that apply closed list systems. Moreover, I expect the effect to be stronger in countries with higher levels of gender equality because in these societies party gatekeepers are likely to face more pressure to support viable female candidacies.

While in open list systems parties do not determine individual candidate's viability to the same extent as in closed list systems, in the former systems too, there is an incentive for parties to balance their ticket. By doing so, a party may guarantee that different segments of voters can choose a suitable representative(s) from the given party's list and thus ensure a good overall result. In the case of open lists systems it is up to parties to field enough female candidates but ultimately it is voters' responsibility to guarantee women's representation. Previous research shows little if any discrimination against female candidates by voters (Darcy and Schramm 1977). Therefore, I do not expect female candidates to fare any worse in open lists systems than in closed lists systems. Also, there is a different body of research suggesting how male candidates are attractive for both male and female voters while in some cases women candidates attract more votes from women than from men (Dolan 1998; Paolino 1995; Plutzer and Zipp 1996). Following from that, one could argue that women candidates benefit from open-list preferential voting as they have higher chances to attract female voters and do not need to rely on parties' list arrangements.

Ordered lists systems lie in-between closed lists and open lists systems. In ordered list systems parties affect individual candidates' electoral chances with the initial list placement but, at the same time, they cannot be held solely responsible for impeding women's representation, as voters have the opportunity to change the list order with preference votes (if they use them). This means that party gatekeepers may have less incentive to include more women in viable list positions as the chain of responsibility is weaker. However, the fact that parties rank their candidates in ordered lists is likely to have consequences for the way in which candidates and their electoral

campaigns are presented to the voters. Therefore, one could ask what voters can actually decide in ordered list systems and how prior ranking affects their vote choice.

In the case of European parliamentary elections, large constituencies (in most cases an entire country) are defined. Past research suggests that voters are likely to identify less with candidates in large constituencies and thus they will tend to use preferential votes less (Katz 1980). Therefore, list ranking also matters a great deal at European elections in ordered list systems. But if there is less responsibility and accountability held by party gatekeepers, women candidates could suffer from less viable positions. Also possible gender quotas may be perceived to be less effective. Moreover, if party gatekeepers feel less incentive to rank women high on the list it means that candidates lower in the list need to make a direct appeal to the voters with their campaign in order to make up for the less-viable starting position. This means that candidates will also need more money to carry out a campaign (Hazan and Voerman 2006: 159). However, the literature on women's representation suggests that one reason why women are disadvantaged in politics is that they have fewer resources, including campaign funding, to secure their seat (Lawless and Fox 2005; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Therefore, all things considered, I expect women to do worse in ordered list systems because parties are likely to perceive less incentive to place female candidates in viable positions, which in turn decreases their likelihood for electoral success.

Therefore, this thesis' central expectations are: (i) women are not necessarily disadvantaged in all types of preference voting systems; and (ii) the variance in women's electability in different voting systems is likely due to the fact that parties' viable candidate selection and ballot balancing may differ under different electoral rules. Moreover, media are likely to cover elections differently when a country employs a preferential versus a non-preferential voting system. Whether or not the party competes as a whole or by individual candidates may influence how media cover the campaign. It

is likely that in systems where voters can demonstrate their preference for a specific candidate the media coverage of the campaign and election is also more candidate- than party-centred. Moreover, the impact of another variable – candidate’s party list placement – on a candidate’s media coverage is likely to differ in varying voting systems. It is reasonable to expect that the way political parties place candidates in their election lists has a stronger impact on the amount of news media attention a candidate attracts in closed and blocked party list systems than it has in countries that employ ordered list preferential voting system.

Therefore, the central expectation of the thesis of explaining the election of women, is built on three main variables: candidate’s party-determined viability (electoral list placement), openness of the ballot structure in the PR list systems (preferential / non-preferential voting system), and candidate’s individual news media coverage. Figure 2.3 illustrates how these variables are linked to each other. The solid lines represent a direct effect, while dashed lines refer to mediated effects.

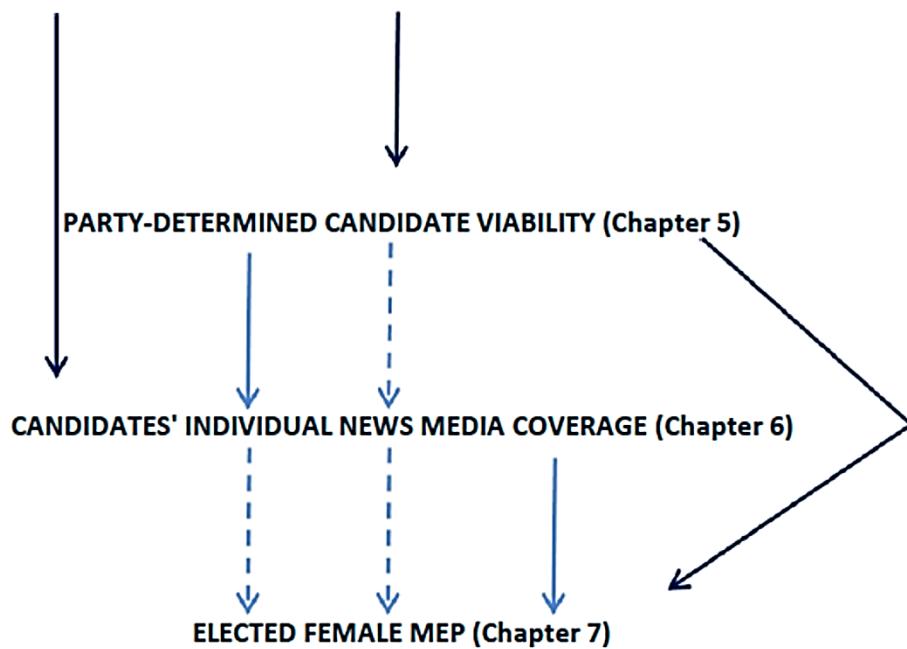
As Figure 2.3 shows, I expect the openness of the ballot structure (electoral rules in PR list systems) to have a direct effect on the viability of female candidacy. This expectation is based on the assumption that party gatekeepers are likely to behave differently in different types of PR list systems when determining (viable) candidacy and designing electoral lists. Figure 2.3 also indicates that the voting system has a direct effect on the amount of media coverage individual candidates receive (in non-preferential voting systems I expect less coverage of individual candidates but rather party level coverage as all the votes pool to the level of party).

The solid lines from candidate viability to candidates’ news media visibility and elected MEP present the assumption that party-determined candidate viability is a central direct predictor of both candidates’ news media coverage and her likelihood of being elected. However, I also expect that part of the “viability” effect on electoral

success likelihood is explained by candidates' news media visibility (left dashed line from news media visibility to elected MEP on Figure 2.3). More importantly, the line starting from electoral rules and proceeding as a dashed line from viable female candidacy to news media coverage and to elected MEP presents one of the central expectations of the thesis. It indicates that the effect of voting rules affect women candidates' likelihood for being elected through party-determined candidate viability and candidates' news media visibility.

**Figure 2.3: Central expectations of the thesis**

**ELECTORAL RULES: PREFERENTIAL VS. NON-PREFERENTIAL VOTING**



In conclusion, this thesis aims to uncover some mechanisms behind the election of women by employing a unique individual level approach. This approach allows me to account for individual, party, and media level variables, in combination with conventional aggregate level measures, to understand better the determinants of women's representation. I also believe that studying in detail women's electoral chances in PR list systems, which are traditionally thought of as the "better" systems for the election of women, will give a more complete picture of how more specific electoral rules together with individual, party, and media level variables influence the number of women in legislative office.

## **PART III – RESEARCH DESIGN**

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### 3 RESEARCH DESIGN

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In order to test the central expectations of the thesis, presented in Figure 2.3, data from 25 European Union member states are utilised.<sup>3</sup> As this thesis examines women's electoral success in PR list systems only, I use the data from the 2004 and 2009 European Parliamentary elections. In this Chapter, I conceptually identify the main dependent variables and explain the reasons why European Parliamentary elections are a good testing ground for the central questions of the thesis. The Chapter proceeds by introducing the levels of analysis; main data sources; and the methods used to conduct the analysis. At the end of the Chapter I explicate the operationalisation of the central concepts of the thesis.

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<sup>3</sup> I do not include data from Malta, Ireland, and the Northern Ireland constituency of the United Kingdom. These cases are excluded because single-transferable votes system is used in these constituencies, instead of a PR list system.

### **3.1 Central concepts of the thesis**

Interest in the election of women is closely linked to the concept of *women's descriptive representation*. As introduced in Chapter Two, Pitkin (1967) sees descriptive representation as “looking like” the represented rather than “acting in the interest of the represented in a manner responsive to them”. Technically, women’s descriptive representation means that representative bodies include female representatives. Hence, similarly to previous research, I conceptualise women’s descriptive representation as the proportion women constitute of all elected representatives in an elected body. However, as discussed in Chapter Two, I see women’s descriptive representation as a more broader concept than just “looking like” the represented, because past research shows strong links between descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation (see for example, Krook 2010; Mansbridge 2003; Mishler and Rose 1997; Sapiro 1981). Moreover, I assume based on past literature (and empirical evidence) that women’s descriptive representation delivers substantive representation to women only if women have a substantial share among elected representatives (MacDonald and O’Brien 2011).

In this thesis I argue that before we can count the number of women elected (measure the descriptive representation), actual female candidates have to, first, get elected. Therefore, I pay special attention to *women's electoral chances*, both at the aggregate and individual level, rather than on *the proportion of women among elected representatives*. By understanding under which conditions women have similar or higher chances than men of progressing from candidate to elected representative, this thesis provides us with knowledge of how to assure that women are not only provided with pseudo-representation in electoral lists but also have realistic chances for actual political representation. I study women’s electoral chances at both aggregate and individual level. The aim of explaining *women's aggregate level electoral success rate*

(the proportion of women among elected representatives divided by the proportion of women among candidates) is to identify how variables that traditionally are shown to predict either women's candidacy, representation, or both, explain women's chances for turning their candidacy into an elected seat. This analysis may reveal institutional and contextual settings that may help to increase women's candidacy but at the same time fail to help women to turn their candidacy into an elected seat. As mentioned earlier, the reason why I primarily study *individual candidate's likelihood of electoral success* and conduct most of the analysis on an individual level is because only this way is it possible to explain the election of individual women by including candidate, party, and country level variables in the models.

But next to women candidates' electoral success, it is also important to examine women's candidacy. Women have a hundred per cent electoral success rate when they constitute forty per cent among candidates and forty per cent among elected representatives, but also when the share of women among candidates and among representatives is only five per cent. Hence, I also study *women's candidacy* at the aggregate level and *women's viable candidacy* at the individual level.

Not all candidates from the same party are similar or equal to one another. Some have more political experience, some are more ambitious, and some are supported by their party more than others. In this thesis, I concentrate on the "inequality" between same party candidates that is created by party gatekeepers who endorse some types of candidates more than others. By candidate viability I, thus, mean the extent to which a candidate has been provided with a competitive starting position by her party. Just as in majority/plurality systems parties determine individual candidate's viability by deciding which constituency she runs in, in PR list systems (with ranked electoral lists) parties determine individual candidate's viability by her electoral list standing. The electoral list standing is especially crucial for election in closed list systems but it also matters in

ordered list systems. Substantially, the list ordering determines which candidates have a realistic chance of winning elected office in ordered and closed list proportional electoral systems. However, due to the fact that past research has primarily studied women's descriptive representation at the aggregate level, women's party-determined viable candidacy in proportional electoral systems has received limited attention.

Finally, I also study *women candidates' news media visibility*. As discussed in Chapter Two, news media coverage is important not only for political parties in general but also for individual candidates. The news media provides candidates with the chance to be recognised by the voters and thus, potentially, win more votes. By candidate's news media visibility I mean the extent to which the candidate is covered in the news. I do not distinguish between negative or positive coverage. News media visibility, thus, projects the extent to which the candidate can be known by the masses, either positively or negatively. Besides individual candidate's news media visibility, I also study *women's aggregate news media visibility*. This concept taps into the sense how present women candidates in general are in the country's news media. The notion of women's aggregate news media coverage hence indicates the extent to which the media makes women candidates visible on TV screens and newspaper pages and consequently in voters' minds.

### **3.2 European Parliamentary Elections**

The literature on EP elections frequently classifies them as second-order elections that are less important than national elections, as there is no government formation (Hix and Marsh 2011; Reif and Schmitt 1980). Yet, often the same candidates and parties compete in both first- and second-order elections (Franklin 2006; Reif and Schmitt 1980), with the exception that women have better access to second-order

elected offices than to national legislative seats (Darcy et al. 1994; Ford and Dolan 1999; Matland and Studlar 1998). Kantola (2009) shows that European Parliament elections are no different from other second-order elections in this respect.

Women have higher levels of descriptive representation in the European parliament than in national parliaments. Kantola (2009) offers four explanations for why there are more women in the European Parliament than in national parliaments. First, institutional circumstances may differ because some countries have different electoral systems for the two parliaments. Second, the European Parliament is sometimes considered less important and, thus, becoming an MEP is not as competitive as becoming a member of the national parliament. Freedman (2002: 179) sees it as “where there is power there are no women; and where there is no power there are women”. Third, the style of politics is argued to be different in the two parliaments. Footitt (1998) shows with her data that women MEPs consider the European Parliament more women-friendly than other political bodies, primarily because the hours are more structured, committee work involves discussions rather than debates, and the politics in general is less confrontational than politics in the British parliament for example. Fourth, the European Parliament is a relatively new institution, leaving less chance for the establishment of men’s hegemony and incumbency advantage (Kantola 2009).

The fact that the European Parliament elections are second-order elections which produce higher levels of representation for women than national election could pose a potential problem for the thesis. The results from the EP elections could prove “too positive” in the sense that we may overestimate women’s chances for election. However, with this thesis, I am not aiming to predict the number of women elected but rather explain under which circumstances the election of women is more likely. Hence, it is important that the substantive relationships between variables do not vary between national and European Parliament elections. Past research provides some confidence

that the overall difference in descriptive representation of women between national and second-order elections may not pose a significant obstacle for this research. Previous studies indicate that the factors associated with the representation of women in national legislatures also hold at second-order elections (see for example, Vengroff et al. 2003). In other words, the inferences we make about the election of women in first- and second-order elections should be the same. Hence, relying on data from the EP elections should not substantially affect the results I obtain and the inferences I make. However, in order to have more confidence in the data from the European elections, in Chapter Four, I compare the aggregate level results from EP elections to results obtained by past research, which has primarily relied on first-order national elections.

In fact, I consider the European elections the most suitable testing ground for the main hypotheses of the thesis primarily because all member states have to employ proportional electoral systems. At the same time, the countries are free to choose the level of openness of the ballot structure. In other words, in the European context I can control for proportional electoral system but at the same time there are variations in types of PR list systems employed by individual member states. This allows me to test for the differences in electing women across different types of PR list systems. Besides controlling for proportional electoral system, with data from the European Parliament elections I also control for the type of institution representatives are elected to and the time of the election. The European Parliament elections provide a unique “controlled environment” for testing my hypotheses.

While the district magnitude varies by member state, as each country has a number of seats corresponding to the size of its population, in nearly all member states the election takes place on a national level. With the exception of Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Poland, and the United Kingdom, in all member states representatives to the European Parliament are elected in a single nation-wide constituency. The

remaining five PR list countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Poland, and the United Kingdom) are divided into relatively large constituencies, too. Therefore, in all cases, we can expect a relatively centralised nation-wide candidate selection, nation-wide campaigning and nation-wide electoral competition.

Farrell and Scully (2010) consider the European Parliamentary elections “a fascinating research site” because it “presents the opportunity to craft powerful research designs incorporating an unusual, indeed probably unique degree of controlled comparison: between members [candidates] of the same political institution chosen under a range of different electoral arrangements” (Farrell and Scully 2010: 36). With this thesis, I seek to exploit the potential of the EP elections to help us understand more about how the exact electoral rules under which the individuals are elected affect women candidates’ likelihood to secure an elected seat.

### **3.3 Levels of analysis**

In order to build upon the findings of the existing literature, the empirical part of the thesis first investigates aggregate level data and how the main institutional and contextual variables of interest – voting system, overall gender equality, and legislative quotas – affect women’s candidacy, descriptive representation, aggregate success rate (the proportion of women among elected MEPs divided by the proportion of women among candidates), and aggregate women’s news media visibility (the proportion of total candidate coverage dedicated to female candidates in each member state). Starting with descriptive aggregate level analysis allows me to, amongst other things, establish if the data from second-order elections show similar relationships to those suggested by previous literature, which has primarily relied on data from first-order national elections. Furthermore, by starting with aggregate level analysis, I am able to identify at which

stage of the election – candidacy, media coverage of the campaign, election of representatives – and how the aforementioned institutional and contextual variables affect the election of women. This should then allow me to pose not only theoretical but also data driven hypotheses for the individual level analysis.

However, as argued in Chapters One and Two, in order to fully understand how the aggregate level variables condition the election of women, empirical Chapters Five, Six, and Seven utilise, besides country level indicators, also individual and party level data. It is likely that not only institutional design and context determine the election of women but that some party and candidate characteristics matter, too. In fact, Miki Caul's (1999) novel work, in which she utilises party level data, demonstrates the importance of party level factors, such as party centralisation and institutionalisation, when explaining women's descriptive representation.

But like electoral rules, general context, and parties, candidates also differ from each other in important ways. Some candidates are politically experienced and enjoy the advantage of incumbency while others do not. Some candidates are politically more ambitious than others. Some candidates spend more resources (time, finances, and personnel) on their campaign than others. Some candidates are endorsed and supported more strongly by their party than others. And some candidates receive more media attention than others. These factors are likely to affect one's chances for getting elected, which is why it is necessary to examine (i) if women and men candidates share similar candidate characteristics, (ii) if these candidate characteristics affect men and women the same way, (iii) and if these candidate characteristics have the same impact on women and men candidates under varying institutional and contextual settings.

Only by employing a candidate level approach can a researcher account for all these different factors at different levels affecting the election of women. Incorporating different level predictors is necessary because by omitting variables at certain levels (i.e.

individual level predictors) we may ignore a possible interaction effect between individual-, party-, and/or country-level variables and thus know little about the mechanisms explaining the election of women. This is why this thesis conducts candidate level analysis as well as aggregate level analysis. I do this by linking unique candidate level data to contextual data.

### **3.4 Data**

In order to conduct the empirical analysis, I employ a variety of different data sources. The thesis utilises aggregate country level indicators, candidate survey data, media content data, and data generated from actual candidate lists. Below is an overview of all the major data sources.

#### *3.4.1 Aggregate level data*

The aggregate level data set includes data from the 2004 and 2009 EP elections. I employ data from these two elections in order to increase the number of observations and thus obtain more robust findings in the aggregate level chapter. I do not utilise data from more European Parliament elections due to the fact that prior to 2004 there were considerably fewer countries in the European Union and therefore there would be great variation in the number of observations available per member state. Additionally, some relevant data (i.e. media content data) is not available for a much longer time period.

I have constructed the country level data set that this thesis uses for aggregate level analysis by combining indicators from various sources. For example, the measure of the central variable of the thesis, voting system employed at the European Parliament elections, originates primarily from Farrel and Scully's (2005) classification, with the

exception of Poland, which according to its Electoral Law is an open list, not a closed list system (Giebler 2012; Kotnarowski 2012). Data, concerning the voting system indicator for Romania and Bulgaria originates from the OSCE report (2009). The measure of overall gender equality in each member states combines indicators collected by Eurostat, the International Labour Organisation, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. The Quota Project's global data base of quotas for women provided the main indicators for candidate quotas and placement mandates. In sum, all the country level indicators originate from sources used widely by both academics and governments.

### *3.4.2 Survey Data*

This thesis exploits the 2009 European Election Study's (EES) Candidate Survey Data in order to conduct candidate level analysis<sup>4</sup>. The 2009 EES Candidate Survey master questionnaire was compiled in English. It was then translated into 22 languages and 33 country-specific questionnaires were produced. The 2009 EES Candidate Survey was carried out in dual mode, i.e. mail questionnaire and web-based survey. The choice of the mode was left to the candidates (Giebler and Wessels 2010).

The sample only excluded totally irrelevant parties or candidates. As a result, all parties that received votes equal to half of the nation-wide electoral threshold are included in the sample. Altogether, more than 6500 candidates were contacted (for more information see, Giebler and Wessels 2010). I do not consider the exclusion of less relevant parties as an obstacle for this research as parties with essentially no chance to

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<sup>4</sup>Alternatively, I also considered using candidate survey data from the Comparative Candidate Study (CCS) project. However, after examining the data, it appeared that the CCS data did not cover enough countries and that the data were not comparable across countries (most variables of interest were missing from more than one CCS country study or asked in a different way). In other words, there were no alternative cross-nationally comparable data available covering elite surveys from a comparable number of countries.

win may have different goals than just vote maximisation and their inclusion in the sample could potentially distort the analysis.

Countries with small number of candidates were overrepresented in the sample in order to have as much possibilities to work with countries with small number of candidates.

The mean response rate was 24%, ranging from 4.4% in Bulgaria and 5.6% in Poland to 34.4% in Malta and 42.9% in Sweden (Giebler et al. 2010). The principal investigators of the 2009 EES Candidate Survey data also note that the response rates of the 2009 study are comparable to respective numbers of the study in 1994 undertaken by Thomassen, Katz, Norris, and Wessels (the over-all response rates are identical). Hence, they state that, “In sum, the representativeness of the 2009 European Election Candidate Study seems acceptable in comparison to the 1994 study which produced highly enlightened insights into European political elites competing for seats in the European Parliament”.

Since this thesis excludes member states that employ the single transferable vote system, the final sample employed in the thesis consists of 1528 candidates from 25 member states, 34% of who are women.

In order to control for the representativeness of the sample, the EES Candidate Survey team calculated Duncan indices of dissimilarity for three candidate characteristics: gender, party affiliation, and proportion of MEPs per country. In regard to gender, the deviation between the population proportions and the sample proportions are only small or moderate. However the differences between the vote share in 2009 election and the proportion of candidates of a party in the respective country (party affiliation) sample are significantly higher. This is primarily because candidates of smaller parties were equally or even more inclined to participate in the study than candidates of parties with higher vote share (Giebler et al. 2010). In order to compensate for these dissimilarities, survey weights are used in the analysis. This thesis utilises a

combined weight for party affiliation and the number of MEPs per country in order to increase the representativeness of the analysis.

The 2009 EES Candidate Survey covers a range of topics, including questions tapping into candidates' political experience and ambition, their ideological positioning, their self-reported campaign effort and resources, their views of political representation, etc. All central variables of interest of this thesis are represented in the 2009 EES Candidate Survey.

### *3.4.3 Media Content Data*

Besides the 2009 EES Candidate Survey, this thesis also utilises the 2009 EES Media Content Study. I use these data to measure the aggregate amount of media coverage female candidates received in each member state and the amount of media coverage individual candidates received.

The 2009 EES Media Content Data cover media in 27 EU member states. The benefits these data provide is that they have been collected EU-wide, using the same coding rules in each country to assure comparability across countries (for more information, see Schuck et al. 2010). Both newspapers and television news coverage were coded in each country. With at least two television news outlets (public and commercial) and at least three newspapers (two "quality" and one tabloid) per country, the total sample consists of 58 television networks and 84 different newspapers. For television the most widely-watched public and commercial television newscast in each country were coded. For newspapers one right-wing and one left-wing broadsheet paper and one tabloid paper in each country were coded (Schuck et al. 2010).

The content analysis was conducted for news items published or broadcast within three weeks running up to the election. With regard to story selection, for television all news items were coded; and for newspapers, all news items on the title

page and on one randomly selected page as well as all stories pertaining particularly to the EU and/or the EU election on any other page of the newspaper were coded (within Political/News, Editorial/Opinion/Comment, and Business/Economy sections) (Schuck et al. 2010). As a result, this case selection covers nearly all campaign-related news stories in major news outlets in each member state.

Coding was carried out by a total of 58 coders in the University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands) and in the University of Exeter (UK). On average, in each country the news coverage was coded by two coders. All coders were native speakers of the respective languages and went through an extensive two-week coder training course. According to the Media Content Data Team, an inter-coder reliability test based on all coders from both locations on a subset of news items was conducted as part of the coder training and yielded satisfactory results (Schuck et al. 2010).

The unit of coding of the data was the individual news story. Since this thesis focuses on MEP candidates' news media coverage, I use these news stories only where MEP candidates were coded as actors. One main actor and up to 5 additional actors were coded in each newspaper and TV story. To be considered an actor, an entity or an individual must have been mentioned by name and quoted directly at least once or indirectly at least twice. In the 25 countries used in the analysis, candidates appeared as actors on 6,465 occasions<sup>5</sup>; least often in Lithuania (13) and most often in Spain (526).

#### *3.4.4 Linking Media Content Data and Candidate Survey Data*

Both the 2009 EES Candidate Survey and Media Content Data were collected within the collaborative project on "Providing an Infrastructure for Research on Electoral Democracy in the European Union" (PIREDEU). This three-year project,

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<sup>5</sup> These 6,465 occasions do not correspond exactly to the number of stories in which candidates appeared because in one news story more than one candidate could have been mentioned.

funded by the European Union under the Seventh Framework Programme, aimed to upgrade the European Election Study in order to provide an infrastructure for research into citizenship, political participation, and electoral democracy in the EU (Schuck et al. 2010). One of the main challenges that the PIREDEU team tried to tackle was the linking of different components of the European Election Study. In order to do so, there was close coordination in regards to different study components, especially between the Candidate Survey and the Voter Survey teams (Giebler and Wessels 2010).

In order to study comprehensively women's electoral success, I consider it necessary to use simultaneously both Candidate Survey data and candidates' news media coverage as measured in the Media Content Study. For that, I needed to link the two data sets. Thanks to accessing the exclusive Candidate Survey data set which included each respondent's name, I was able to manually link the amount of media coverage a candidate received to her / his survey responses.

However, not all candidates who received media coverage were identifiable from the coding of the Media Study. This means that only media coverage of candidates who had their personal actor code can be used in the analysis studying candidates' individual news media coverage, and linked to the Candidate Survey data set. Therefore, candidates whose media coverage was not coded personally but as "other X party MEP candidate" resulted in missing values in both data sets that I use for explaining candidate's individual news media coverage and their chances for electoral success. In most cases, only those candidates that occupied leading positions in election lists and prominent independent candidates had their personal actor code, and on some occasions a few candidates on lower list positions were assigned an individual actor code, too. Hence, the sample of candidates whose media coverage was individually measured over represents prominent candidates (election list leaders) and candidates from viable parties. The result of this selection process is that out of the 6,465 occasions in which

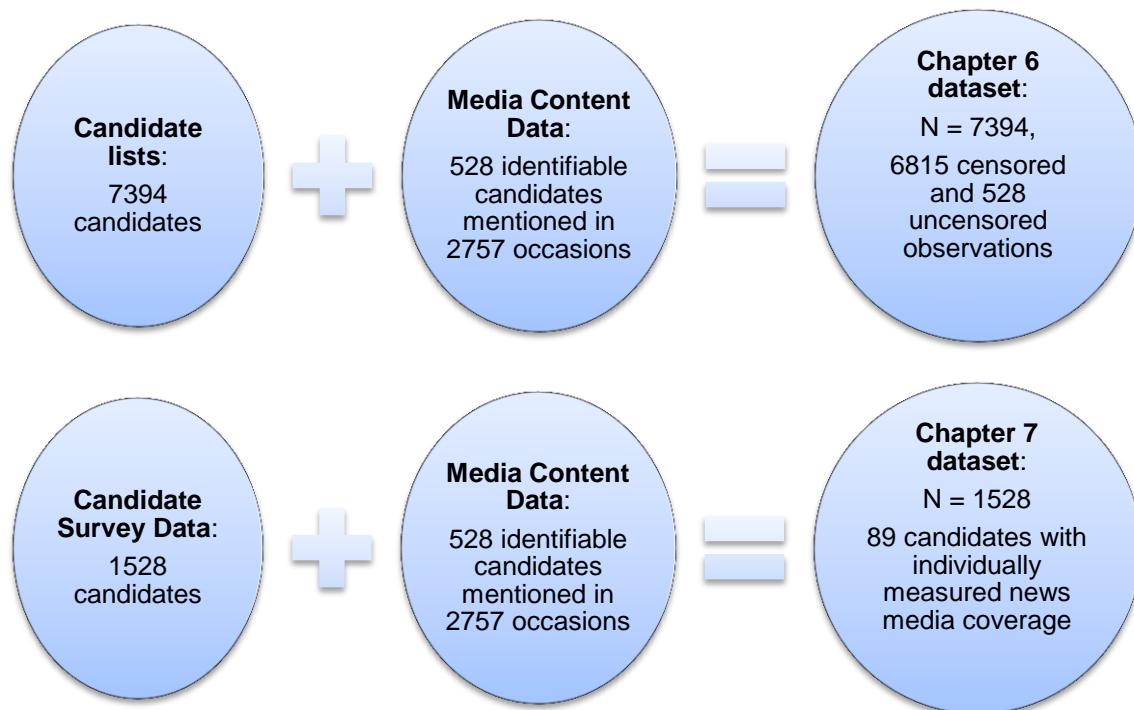
candidates appeared as actors in news stories, I can link 2,757 occasions to 284 individual candidates. In addition, the Media Content Data team assigned individual actor code to further 244 candidates, who, however, received no individual media coverage. Thus, I have measured media coverage for 528 candidates in total. I will address this selection bias in more detail and explain the substantive meaning and solution to the bias in the empirical chapters of the thesis, which utilise the Media Content data set. But since gender was coded for all candidates that received media coverage (also for the ones without a personal actor code), there is no selection bias caused by coding procedures in aggregate level analysis.

Also, not all candidates whose news media coverage was individually measured by the Media Content Study participated in the Candidate Survey. Therefore, in Chapter Six, in which I use candidate's individual media coverage as a dependent variable, I created a dataset listing all MEP candidates from relevant parties. This way I am able to exploit the essential background information of all candidates and the individually measured media coverage of 528 candidates. The final data set used in Chapter Six is built from candidate lists to which I manually link candidates' individual media coverage from the 2009 EES Media Content Data (see Figure 3.1 for illustration). While in this way I am able to utilise all the cases with individually measured news media coverage, the aforementioned problem of selection bias is still not fully resolved. In order to address these issues, special modeling techniques designed to deal with censored data are applied.

Figure 3.1 also depicts the way I constructed the data set for Chapter Seven in which I study individual candidates' likelihood of getting elected. Due to the question of interest, it is necessary to employ Candidate Survey responses in order to control for individual level predictors (i.e. political experience, other than incumbency; political ambition; level at which candidate is selected; time dedicated to campaigning, etc.) that

are not measurable by relying solely on candidate lists. Thus, in Chapter Seven I link a candidate's news media coverage to her survey response. Out of the 528 candidates whose media coverage is individually recorded by the Media Content Data, 89 participated in the Candidate Survey. To all other Candidate Survey respondents I assigned a value "0" for news media coverage, acknowledging that zero values include both candidates who received media coverage but whose media coverage is not individually measured and candidates who received no media coverage.

**Figure 3.1: Linking media content data to candidate (survey) data**



In each empirical chapter, I will further specify the exact data used, the main features of these data, and how I manage the problems with the data with varying modeling techniques.

### **3.5 Method**

A number of insightful scholarly works on the representation of women have relied on qualitative analysis (see for example, Childs 2008; Curtin 2008; Murray 2008). These studies offer in-depth understanding about the meaning of women's representation and how individual representatives view their role as descriptive and / or symbolic representatives. In this thesis, however, I rely on quantitative methods, which do not allow me to answer the same questions. However, I believe that a quantitative approach can complement the other types of analysis and provide valuable knowledge on the overall mechanisms that either support or hinder women's chances for representation. Whether we think that women need a critical mass of women in the legislature (MacDonald and O'Brien 2011) or rather critical actors who consciously represent women (Murray 2008), in both cases it is important that women are elected in the first place. Hence, due to the fact that I employ quantitative data and data analysis techniques, this thesis does not describe the types of women elected or whether they substantively represent women but aims to explain the conditions which support the election of women in general.

In terms of method, this thesis is distinct from the majority of work on women's descriptive representation. Kantola's (2009) study on women's political representation in the European Union utilises descriptive aggregate level data only. This approach allows her to describe the differences in women's representation across member states but provides no means to explain these differences. More quantitative studies on women's representation often employ statistical tools that allow exploration of the relationships between variables but most studies have been able to explain aggregate level relationships only, without controlling for individual and / or party level factors (see for example, Jones 2009; Matland 2005; Norris 1996; Norris and Franklin 1997; Reynolds 1999; Tripp and Kang 2008).

This study is closest in terms of approach and method to Schwindt-Bayer et al.'s (2010) study which examines gender effect at the individual candidate level on electoral success in single transferable vote systems. Schwindt-Bayer et al. (2010) are one of the first to use the individual candidate as a unit of analysis and thereby incorporate individual, party, and country level variables in the analysis. However, while Schwindt-Bayer and her colleagues (2010) studied the election of women in single transferable vote system, this thesis examines the election of women in PR list systems which are more widely used across Europe.

I employ a variety of statistical methods, such as different regression models and selection models, which best fit the data and the purposes of the analysis. Most importantly, when conducting individual level analysis, I pay special attention to the limitations and specifics of the data I use. For example, in most of the empirical chapters the data come from a data structure in the population that is hierarchical, i.e. multi-level. Most candidates running for the European Parliament are not independent candidates but they are nested in parties. Since the European Parliament elections take place at the country level (each country elects its representatives), it means that the parties are nested in countries. In this thesis I explain the election of women by utilising variables from all three levels (individual candidate, party, country). The central assumption for causal inference from regression models is that individual observations are independent. However, with nested structure this may not be the case because the correlations between candidates within the same party or within the same country are likely to be higher than the average correlation of candidates between units. If we do not address the issue of hierarchical data structure, we will underestimate the uncertainty of causal effects from pooled estimates (the standard errors of higher level variables will be deflated). Hence, in the empirical chapters of the thesis I will address the issue of

multi-level data. Since I employ different specific statistical techniques in different chapters, I will discuss the exact approach in each chapter individually.

### **3.6 Measurement of central variables**

In this section, I explain how I measure the central concepts identified above. I will also discuss the operationalisation of the main independent variables, which I will use throughout the empirical chapters of the thesis.

On the aggregate level, I employ four different dependent variables in order to establish at which stage the traditional country level predictors explain women's representation. I use the *proportion of women among candidates* in each member state to investigate which country level variables best explain women's chances for candidacy. The *proportion of women among elected representatives* is used to measure the actual descriptive representation of women. As this thesis is particularly interested in studying what affects women's electoral chances, I also examine how institutional and contextual variables affect *women's aggregate electoral success rate*. I measure this aggregate success rate by dividing the proportion of women among elected representatives by the proportion of women among candidates. If women constitute 30 per cent of candidates and 30 per cent of elected representatives, the success rate equals "1". If women constitute 20 per cent of candidates but 30 per cent of elected representatives, the success rate equals "1.5". Therefore, all values above "1" indicate a situation where women have higher levels of descriptive representation than their share among candidates would have predicted. In contrast, all values below "1" describe cases where women are on average less successful in turning their candidacy into an elected seat than men.

The fourth dependent variable used in aggregate level analysis, *women candidates' news media visibility* indicates the extent of campaign coverage that female candidates received. For this indicator I relied on the 2004 and 2009 EES Media Content Data sets. I first calculated for each election the number of news stories per member state where MEP candidates appeared as actors. As the actor's gender was coded, I could then calculate the proportion of all MEP candidate coverage on women candidates. If, for example, MEP candidates appeared as actors in 100 times in one member state, and in 30 times the MEP candidate was a woman, then women candidates' news media visibility at a given country at a given election is 30 per cent.

At the individual level, I employ three different dependent variables: a candidate's party-determined viability, a candidate's individual news media coverage, and whether or not a candidate was elected. *Whether a candidate was elected or not*, is a dichotomous variable. If a candidate was elected to be a member of the European Parliament she has a value "1", if she was not elected she has a value "0".

Another central dependent variable is *candidate's party-determined viability*. In order to measure candidate's party-determined viability, either of two measures is used: (i) candidate's electoral list placement, or (ii) an overall measure of candidate's viability, developed by Giebler and Wessels (2010).

The categorisation of the overall viability variable is based on the candidate's list position in relation to the potential number of seats won by her party (Hix et al. 2009). In this way, the measure will also take into account a candidate's party's overall viability. For countries with open list preference voting (Denmark, Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, and Poland), all candidates were set on the same list position, which is why these countries are only included in the analysis where the dependent variable is candidate's electoral success or news media visibility, and not her viability. Since different parties expect to win varying numbers of elected seats, list ranking alone does

not fully explain individual candidate's viability. A candidate who is ranked on list position number three has a high chance of being elected if she runs for a party that expects to win six seats in the constituency, but no chance of being elected if she runs for a party that expects to win one seat in a given constituency. Therefore, dependent on party's overall viability the same list position is likely to mean a different level of individual viability in different parties' lists.

In order to incorporate uncertainty into the measure of viability, the standard deviation of discrepancy between the predictions and the seats that were actually won was calculated for each country. As a result, candidates with a list position below the predicted seats minus one standard deviation were classified as "safe candidates". Candidates with a list position above the predicted seats plus one standard deviation were classified as "unpromising candidates", and all other candidates were classified as "doubtful" (Giebler et al. 2010a). This thesis employs dummy variables for candidate's viability (determined by party) when used as an independent variable, "unpromising candidate" being the reference category. In Chapter Five, in which party-determined candidate viability is the dependent variable, I treat the three-category viability measure as an ordinal variable.

In general, I prefer to use the latter measure of candidate viability as it simultaneously takes into account both candidate's individual party-determined viability (her list position) and her party's overall electoral viability. However, in Chapter 6 in which I employ full candidate lists, rather than survey data, I cannot use the overall viability variable. In this case, I include in the models an additional independent variable measuring party's overall viability.

*Candidate's individual news media coverage* is measured by using the 2009 EES Media Content Data. First, I transposed the Media Content Data set by transforming candidates (actors) from variables to cases. This way it is possible to

calculate the number of times each candidate is mentioned (the amount of coverage she gained). Since the number of news stories covering MEP candidates varies from one country to another, I generated a standardised measure of candidate coverage by calculating the proportion of times a candidate was mentioned against the total number of times MEP candidates were mentioned in the news media in a given country (share of media coverage). As a result, the values of the standardised candidate coverage vary from “0” to “100”, indicating the percentage of total MEP coverage a specific candidate received in a given country. More detailed measurement of and descriptive statistics for all the dependent variables are presented in Appendix 1.

The type of *voting system* employed for the 2009 European election is the central independent variable. Member states are classified similarly to Farrel and Scully (2005), with the exception of Poland, which according to its Electoral Law is an open list, not a closed list system (Giebler 2012; Kotnarowski 2012). I distinguish three categories of voting systems, as explained in Chapter Two: closed list non-preferential voting system; ordered list preferential voting system, and open list preferential voting system. I classify Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and the United Kingdom (excluding the constituency of Northern Ireland) as countries employing closed party list voting, as the votes pool to the level of the party and the choice of individual representatives depends on a list order determined by the party. In Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Sweden ordered list preferential voting is used to elect their representatives to the European Parliament. In ordered list systems parties rank the candidates in electoral lists but voters have the opportunity to re-order these lists with preference votes. Finally, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, and Poland employ open list preference voting, where party list placement does not influence the choice of individual legislators. In the analysis I employ dummy variables to measure

the voting system, closed list non-preferential voting system being the reference category.

For measuring *overall gender equality* in society, I calculated a gender equality index (GEI) based on a modified EU Gender Equality Index developed by Platenga and her colleagues (2009)<sup>6</sup>. I take Platenga et al.'s (2010) European Union Gender Equality Index as a starting point when constructing my measure. It was necessary to amend Platenga et al.'s (2010) gender equality index slightly in order to calculate a score for each EU member state (their study did not include Romania and Bulgaria); and to avoid Platenga and her colleagues' method of replacing missing cases with mean values.

The Gender Equality Index used in this thesis includes four major areas of life where equality between men and women varies across Europe: equal share of employment; equal share of money; equal share of (decision-making) power; and equal share of time. I use the following eight indicators to measure these different dimensions of gender equality:

- Equal share of employment: (1) gender gap in employment; (2) gender gap in unemployment.
- Equal share of money: (3) gender pay gap; (4) gender gap in risk of poverty after social transfer.
- Equal share of power: (5) gender gap in national parliament (lower chamber); (6) gender gap in ISCO 1 level occupations.
- Equal share of time: (7) gender gap in hours spent educating children and caring for them among people in full-time employment; (8) gender gap in hours spent cooking and doing house chores among people in full-time employment.

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<sup>6</sup> I construct my own measure primarily because the Social Watch gender equality index is not the most suitable measure for European countries as it overemphasises access to primary and secondary education, which is every EU member state's basic obligation according to the European Social Charter. Therefore, there is very little variation in these terms and the real issues of gender equality in Europe are more in the areas of career and power, and balancing work and family.

Since the indicators are measured on different scales, the actual values of the indicators are standardised in order to calculate the composite index. I employ the min-max methodology in order to standardise the indicators. The same method is used also for United Nations Development Programme Gender-related Development Index, for the Gender Empowerment Measure (UNDP, 2006) and for the EU Gender Equality Index (Platenga et al., 2010).

The formula is:

$$\text{Standardised value} = \frac{|\text{actual value } x_1| - \text{min value } x_1}{\text{max value } x_1 - \text{min value } x_1},$$

where the actual value is a national score on the indicator (i.e., gender gap of 5% in unemployment); where a situation of absolute equality (no gender gap) refers to the maximum value and has assigned the value 0; and where the minimum value is set at a level which is a little below the actual minimum value within the sample of EU countries. Since gender equality is understood as the absence of gender gaps, both positive and negative gaps are treated the same way which means that the absolute value of the gender gap is used. As a result, the standardised values of each indicator vary between 0 and 1, where 0 corresponds to a situation of the worst inequality in the EU, and 1 corresponds to a situation of absolute equality. The composite index is calculated by summing up the standardised values of all indicators and dividing the sum by the number of indicators.

In order to measure the use of legislative and voluntary party quotas, I utilise the data collected by the Quota Project. The use of candidate gender quotas is summarised in Tables G and J in Appendix 2. Also, more detailed measurement of and descriptive statistics for all other independent variables are presented in Appendix 2.

In conclusion, I believe that the data and methods I use in this thesis are appropriate to test the expectations set out in Chapter Two. In order to avoid any methodological confusion, I will revisit the data sources and statistical techniques I employ in each empirical chapter.

## **PART IV – EXPLAINING THE ELECTION OF WOMEN AT THE AGGREGATE LEVEL**

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## 4 WOMEN CANDIDATES' PRESENCE AT THE 2004 AND 2009 EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS

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As stated in Chapters One and Two, an individual level approach to studying women's representation is necessary in order to fully understand how different individual, party, media, and institutional / contextual factors influence the number of women in legislative office. But before testing the central expectations of the thesis, it is important to examine whether the aggregate level relationships concerning women's representation identified by previous literature also hold in the context of European Parliamentary elections. In Chapter Three, I briefly covered the differences of European elections (second-order elections) from national elections (first-order elections). However, I also claimed that the effects of various explanatory variables is likely to be the same in these different types of elections because, despite the fact that women tend to achieve higher levels of descriptive representation in second-order elections compared to first-order elections, past research provides evidence that the variables and mechanisms affecting the election of women in national elections also have similar effects in local and regional elections (see for example, Vengroff et al. 2003). In order

to provide support for these claims, I test in this Chapter if the aggregate level analysis of the data from the 2004 and 2009 EP elections yields similar conclusions to past research, which has relied on aggregate level data primarily from national elections.

As explained in Chapters Two and Three, I expect different explanatory variables of women's descriptive representation to affect at different stages of the elections women's likelihood of securing a legislative seat. Therefore, this Chapter also investigates which previously identified predictors influence: (i) the share of women among candidates, (ii) the proportion of news media coverage of all MEP candidates dedicated to female MEP candidates, (iii) the share of women among elected MEPs, and (iv) women candidates' aggregate electoral success rate (the share of women among elected MEPs divided by the share of women among candidates). I consider such an approach necessary in order to fully understand how and why different variables affect women's chances in the electoral process. For example, certain institutional designs, e.g. legislative candidate gender quotas, may increase the proportion of women among candidates but at the same time not increase female candidates' chances of progressing from candidates to representatives.

Since I assume that certain institutional and contextual variables do not have the same impact on women's candidacy and their actual representation, I study, next to descriptive representation, also women candidates' aggregate success rate. This concept refers to how successful women are in progressing from candidates to representatives. By studying women's electoral success rate, this Chapter aims to shed light on institutional and contextual features which may increase women's candidacy but do not necessarily increase their share among elected representatives. I consider women's electoral success rate an interesting and a useful concept to investigate, next to more traditional women's candidacy and descriptive representation. Women's aggregate electoral success rate is likely to advance the knowledge of under which conditions

women candidates are the most successful at progressing from candidates to elected representatives. Hence, while the concept of descriptive representation is more static by capturing a state, women's electoral success rate tells us more about the process of progressing from candidates to elected representatives.

#### **4.1 Expectations and hypotheses**

In this Chapter, the hypotheses related to what influences women's candidacy, women's news media visibility, women's descriptive representation, and electoral success rate on aggregate level are set out and tested. In this section, I present some generic expectations and hypotheses that structure the aggregate level analysis. The findings from this Chapter will not only enable me to evaluate if the mechanisms affecting the election of women at national elections also work similarly at European Parliamentary elections, but the findings should also show how institutional and contextual variables affect the specific stages of the election of women and thus help me specify more detailed hypotheses in the following chapters.

##### *Voting system*

One of the central aims of this thesis is to study how specific institutional designs, such as the type of voting system, used in PR list electoral systems, influence the election of women. As explained in Chapters Two and Three, I distinguish between open and ordered list preferential voting systems and closed list non-preferential voting systems. While in the open and ordered list voting systems voters do not only choose between parties but also between candidates by using preference votes, in closed list voting systems the vote choice is only between parties. However, in ordered and closed list systems party gatekeepers rank order candidates in electoral lists, which affects the

individual legislators chosen, while in open list systems no prior rank ordering by party gatekeepers takes place. Therefore, open and closed list systems differ from each other in two important ways: one allows party gatekeepers to “choose” future representatives with rank ordered electoral lists but does not allow voters to choose between individual candidates, while the other system does not allow party gatekeepers to “choose” future representatives but allows voters to determine individual representatives with preference votes. Ordered list systems, however, have common features with both open list and closed list voting systems, by allowing both party gatekeepers and voters to influence which individual legislators are elected.

In Chapter Two (see pp. 69-75), I argued that the openness of the ballot structure (preference / non-preference voting system) has a direct effect on party-determined viable women candidacy and women candidates’ individual news media coverage, while influencing indirectly – through candidate viability and new media visibility – women candidates’ chances for electoral success (see Figure 2.3, p. 76). At the aggregate level, I cannot test the hypotheses related to interaction effects of individual and institutional variables, which is why I will only hypothesise the main effects, relying primarily on findings from past research.

The literature on candidate selection suggests that in PR list systems where preference vote is available, party label cues are weaker than in closed list systems. This increases the importance of personal characteristics that help a candidate to distinguish from other same-party candidates (Carey 1997; Carey and Shugart 1995; Katz 1980). Shugart (1994) thus argues that women may have an advantage in a system that emphasises personal characteristics because being a woman makes one different in the political realm and allows one to create personal ties with the voters on the basis of that difference. Valdini (2012: 8) takes this assumption further by claiming that voters, when faced with a preference vote, “will consciously work in the interest of equality by voting

for women and thereby increasing the chances that female candidates will be selected” by party gatekeepers in subsequent elections. Based on this assumption and Valdini’s (2012) empirical findings, I expect women to have a higher share among candidates in open and ordered list systems compared to closed list voting system (see Table 4.1.). However, alternatively, if the majority of the party gatekeepers are men who wish to prevent women from using gender to their advantage, it is unlikely that women would have higher chances for candidacy in preference voting systems compared to non-preference voting systems.

As shown on Figure 2.3, I also expect the openness of the ballot structure to influence women candidates’ chances for media coverage. To reiterate, the main difference between voting systems in PR list systems lies in whether the party competes as a whole or by individual candidates. This, however, may influence how media cover the campaign. It is likely that in systems where voters can demonstrate their preference for a specific candidate the media coverage of the campaign and election is also more candidate than party centred. We know from Chapter Two that incumbent office holders and highly viable candidates are likely to have an advantage in gaining extensive news media coverage. Moreover, these individual level variables probably have a stronger impact in more candidate based systems (preference voting). However, due to low levels of women’s descriptive representation female candidates are less likely incumbents than men. In a system where individual characteristics matter to a larger extent, women are more likely to be disadvantaged in terms of news media coverage. Therefore, I expect that at the aggregate level women receive more news media coverage in party-centred closed list systems compared to more candidate centred ordered and open list systems.

The expectation about women’s descriptive representation (the proportion of women among elected MEPs) is more straightforward. Past empirical research shows

that closed lists are more advantageous for the election of women in PR list systems than preference voting (Caul 1999; Htun 2002; Htun 2005; Matland 2005; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). Contrary to Shugart's (1994) expectations, women candidates do not seem to be able to take advantage of their sex as a distinguishing personal characteristic to gain more votes in systems that allow preference voting. Therefore, at the aggregate level I base my expectations on previous empirical findings and hypothesise that women have higher levels of descriptive representation in closed list systems compared to open and ordered list systems. Past research also indicates that the type of voting system interacts with candidate gender quotas (see for example, Jones 2009; Tripp and Kang 2008). However, due to a small number of cases, I will not test the hypothesis of an interaction effect between candidate quotas and voting systems at the aggregate level but will revisit this expectation in the following chapters.

Finally, as women are likely to have easier access to candidacy in preference voting systems while they are more likely to have higher levels of descriptive representation in closed list systems, I expect women to have higher aggregate electoral success rate in closed list systems than in preference voting systems. As can be seen in Table 4.1, if preference voting has a positive effect on the proportion of women among candidates, but a negative effect on the proportion of women among elected representatives, it can in sum have only negative effects on women's aggregate electoral success rate (per cent women among elected representatives divided by per cent women among candidates). Such an anomaly describes a situation where in one type of voting systems (preference voting systems) women are more successful in winning a candidacy while in another type of voting systems (non-preference voting systems) women are more successful in winning an elected seat and thus progressing from candidates to representatives than in the other types of PR-list voting systems. Hence, it is crucial to distinguish between winning a candidacy and winning an elected seat.

However, this anomaly also suggests that the different roles party gatekeepers and voters play in these different types of PR list voting systems provide female candidates with varying chances along the path from candidates to representatives. With these hypotheses I expect party gatekeepers to support women's candidacy in preference voting systems more than in non-preference voting systems. However, once women become candidates I assume, based on the hypotheses, that party gatekeepers in non-preference (closed list) voting systems support the actual election of women candidates more than voters do in purely preferential (open list) voting systems or party gatekeepers and voters jointly do in flexible (ordered list) preferential voting systems. This appears to be one of the mechanisms that can explain why certain institutional rules are likely to help women to win candidacy but are not likely to help them to win elected seats more often than other types of institutional settings.

### *Overall gender equality*

Table 4.1 indicates that the effect of overall gender equality on women's presence during the elections is more straightforward. I expect women to have a higher share among candidates, enjoy more news media coverage, have higher levels of descriptive representation and in sum have higher electoral success rates in countries where women and men are in general more equal to each other. As explained in Chapter Two, in more gender equal societies (i) women have better access to candidacy because they possess necessary resources and skills; (ii) women receive more media coverage as in more gender equal society media, too, is likely to treat male and female candidates more equally; and (iii) voters are likely to vote for women because in more gender equal societies political office is considered as suitable for women as for men. This all should increase women's aggregate electoral success rate, too.

### *Legislative quotas*

At the aggregate level, I will also pay central attention to the effect of legislative quotas on women's candidacy, news media coverage, representation, and electoral success rate (see Table 4.1 for expectations). The most direct aim of any quota policy is to increase the number of women among candidates. Previous research also presents empirical evidence that candidate quotas have a positive effect on women's candidacy (Valdini 2012). However, as discussed in Chapter Two, the impact of legislative quotas is less clear in terms of women candidates' news media coverage and women's descriptive representation, especially if no placement mandates are in place. If legislative quotas only increase women's candidacy but not their viable candidacy (higher electoral list placements) then it is unlikely that in PR list systems legislative quotas would substantially increase the share of women elected. Since the number of countries that employ legislative quotas with placement mandates is small, I cannot include this variable in the aggregate level analysis. Therefore, there is no guarantee that women in countries that employed legislative quotas had higher viability and thus a better access to news media coverage and an elected seat. In return, if legislative quotas only increase the proportion of women among candidates but not among representatives, the quotas should have a negative effect on women's aggregate electoral success rate.

Table 4.1 summarises the expectations discussed above.

**Table 4.1: Central expectations of aggregate level analysis**

	Women's candidacy	Women's news media visibility	Women's descriptive representation	Women candidates' electoral success rate
Preference voting	Positive effect	Negative effect	Negative effect	Negative effect
Gender equality	Positive effect	Positive effect	Positive effect	Positive effect
Legislative quotas	Positive effect	No effect	No effect	Negative effect

## **4.2 Data and Measurement**

This Chapter relies on an aggregate level data set, which I have created by bringing together various country level indicators from the 2004 and 2009 EP elections (see Chapter Three, pp. 86-87, for detailed description).

All the central variables of interest are measured as explained in Chapter Three (see pp. 96-97), except for the overall gender equality. The gender equality index used in this Chapter is based on seven indicators instead of the original eight, excluding the measure of the proportion of women in national parliaments. This indicator is excluded from the index because it is used as an independent proxy to account for women's aggregate political experience in each member state. While other variables of interest vary from 2004 to 2009, I employ the same measure of overall gender equality in both election years. While there may have been minor changes in the overall gender equality in some countries, the index utilises indicators that are not likely to change considerably during a period of five years. Moreover, as explained in Chapter Three, the gender equality index employs indicators measured between 2007 and 2009. Since the indicators of the gender equality index are not expected to change considerably from 2004 to 2009, and, due to the fact that some indicators have been measured in-between the two elections, the index is a reasonable tool to provide a proxy for overall levels of gender equality in both 2004 and 2009.

Besides the aforementioned central predictors of interests, I will also control for the following variables in the aggregate level models.

As discussed in Chapter Two, political ideologies are not gender equal. Therefore, I control for the strength of left-wing / liberal / green ideology in the European Parliament elections in each member state. This measure indicates the proportion of seats won by national parties that are affiliated with the Social Democrats (PES), Liberals and Liberal Democrats (ALDE), Greens and Regionalists (G-EFA), or

Communists, Democratic Socialists and the Far Left European Parliamentary party groups.

In order to control for women's political experience, I include a control variable measuring the share of women in national parliaments during the time of the European Parliament elections. This measure can be thought of as a proxy of the proportion of viable women candidates in a political system. I could not use the share of women among incumbent MEPs as the political experience proxy because in nine member states out of the 25 included in the analysis, no incumbents were competing at the 2004 EP elections as the countries had just joined the EU.

In the aggregate multivariate analysis I also include a control variable of district magnitude (the total number of MEP seats per country), and an election year dummy. Measurement of all variables used in the analyses is summarised in Appendices 1 and 2.

In the analysis, I rely on descriptive measures and on ordinary least squares regression models. Since two observations from each member state are utilised (2004 and 2009 EP elections), I employ robust standard errors clustered by country. I use robust standard errors because the assumption of the independence of observations is violated by using two same country observations. Robust standard errors assure that clustering of the data is accounted for and thus correct standard errors are used in the estimation.

#### **4.3 Variations in women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate**

Let us start by examining descriptive analysis of women's candidacy, news media coverage, representation, and electoral success rate. Aggregate level descriptive statistics show that the proportion of women among candidates and elected members of

the European Parliament (MEPs) varies significantly across the 25 EU member states that all employ a PR list electoral system for the election of the MEPs (see Tables 4.2 and 4.3). While women constitute around 20 per cent of all candidates at both 2004 and 2009 EP elections in Cyprus and Hungary, the figure is more than double in Austria, Belgium, France, Slovenia and Sweden.

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 also display extensive variation in the amount of news media coverage of women candidates as a proportion of all MEP candidates' media coverage. Unlike with candidacy and descriptive representation, there is much greater within country variation across elections in terms of the amount of news media coverage female candidates attracted compared to male candidates. I claim that these yearly variations in women's aggregate news media visibility are most likely caused by the fact that the total pool of candidates varies from one election to another. As I further argue in Chapter Six, media primarily covers highly viable candidates only. Thus, it is possible that there are more viable female candidates in one election compared to another in any given country. However, certain patterns prevail throughout the years, with women gaining more than average news media coverage in Northern Europe and lower than average news media coverage in Southern Europe. Spain and Sweden are the two extremes: during both 2004 and 2009 EP elections female candidates received the least news media coverage compared to male candidates in Spain (8% and 4% respectively) and the most in Sweden (44% and 49% respectively).

As Tables 4.2 and 4.3 show, countries with a high share of female candidates are not always countries with the highest share of female representatives. The most right-hand column in both tables describes women candidates' electoral success rate. This rate is calculated by dividing the percentage value of women among elected MEPs by the percentage value of women among candidates. Value "1" corresponds to a situation where the share of women among elected representatives is exactly the same as their

share among candidates. In such a situation, both women and men have on average the same chances of being elected. While in both 2004 and 2009 the total value for all countries is around “1”, there are large cross-country variations, ranging from “0” in Cyprus in 2004 (no woman was elected) to “2” in Estonia (the share of women among elected MEPs is twice as big as their share among candidates). In this thesis, I am particularly interested in what determines why some candidates are more successful than others and how these effects are mediated by candidate sex. Therefore, I will pay special attention to women candidates’ aggregate electoral success rates.

While Tables 4.2 and 4.3 show minor differences in women candidates’ electoral success rate from one election to another, there are somewhat more noticeable differences in the other values. Both the share of women among candidates as well as among elected representatives increased from 2004 to 2009 (by 4 and 5 percentage points respectively). However, the increased number of female candidates did not elicit more extensive media coverage of women. To the contrary, female candidates’ received on average six percentage points less media coverage during the 2009 EP elections compared to the 2004 elections. While women received relatively less news media coverage in the 2004 EP elections than their share among candidates would have merited they receive, this gender bias in news media coverage is even more prevalent at the 2009 EP elections.

**Table 4.2: Women's presence in the 2004 European Parliament elections**

	% Women among candidates	% News media coverage of women candidates	% Women among elected MEPs	Women candidates' success rate
Austria	43	19	28	0.65
Belgium	47	26	33	0.70
Bulgaria	38	.	44	1.16
Czech republic	26	28	21	0.81
Cyprus	23	26	0	0.00
Denmark	34	42	43	1.26
Estonia	25	28	50	2.00
Finland	36	37	43	1.19
France	49	20	45	0.92
Germany	33	16	33	1.00
Greece	29	31	29	1.00
Hungary	21	13	38	1.81
Italy	32	21	21	0.66
Latvia	27	20	33	1.22
Lithuania	21	17	38	1.81
Luxembourg	31	27	50	1.61
The Netherlands	28	16	48	1.71
Poland	23	16	15	0.65
Portugal	32	28	25	0.78
Romania	27	.	29	1.07
Slovakia	27	40	36	1.33
Slovenia	46	30	43	0.93
Spain	35	8	26	0.74
Sweden	40	44	47	1.18
United Kingdom	28	17	26	0.93
Total	32	24.8	31.2	1.09

**Table 4.3: Women's presence in the 2009 European Parliament elections**

	% Women among candidates	% News media coverage of women candidates	% Women among elected MEPs	Women candidates' success rate
Austria	40	6	41	1.03
Belgium	48	12	36	0.75
Bulgaria	36	25	35	0.97
Czech republic	31	15	18	0.58
Cyprus	21	13	33	1.57
Denmark	37	26	46	1.24
Estonia	30	20	50	1.67
Finland	46	22	62	1.35
France	50	15	46	0.92
Germany	33	23	37	1.12
Greece	35	25	32	0.91
Hungary	20	33	36	1.80
Italy	36	6	22	0.61
Latvia	35	19	36	1.03
Lithuania	26	15	25	0.96
Luxembourg	33	19	17	0.52
The Netherlands	36	16	48	1.33
Poland	22	15	22	1.00
Portugal	44	18	36	0.82
Romania	25	38	36	1.44
Slovakia	28	16	38	1.36
Slovenia	48	11	29	0.60
Spain	42	4	36	0.86
Sweden	45	49	56	1.24
United Kingdom	32	9	33	1.03
Total	35.2	18.8	36.2	1.07

In the following pages, I aim to explain with conventional institutional and contextual variables the cross-national differences in women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate.

#### **4.4 Explaining women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rates**

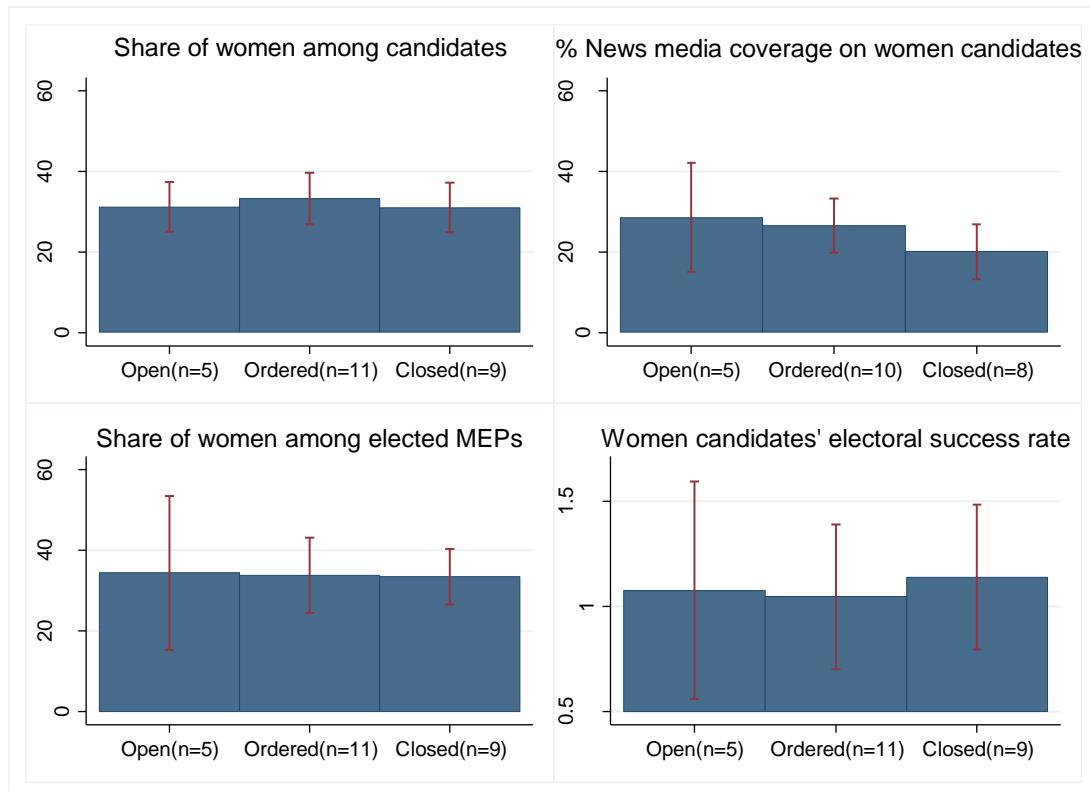
In this section, I first present some descriptive figures of how the central independent variables of interest – the voting system, overall gender equality, and legislative candidate gender quotas – affect the mean values of women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate. I then continue by presenting the results from multivariate analysis, where I can at the same time control for other possible covariates.

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 display the changes in the mean values of women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate across different PR list voting systems. Along with the means the plots show 95% confidence error bars. If, for example, we collected data from another European Parliament election (from the same countries) it is 95 per cent likely that the mean for the new sample will fall in the area bounded by the error bars. Hence, only if the means and their error regions do not overlap, the difference between the two groups is statistically significant.

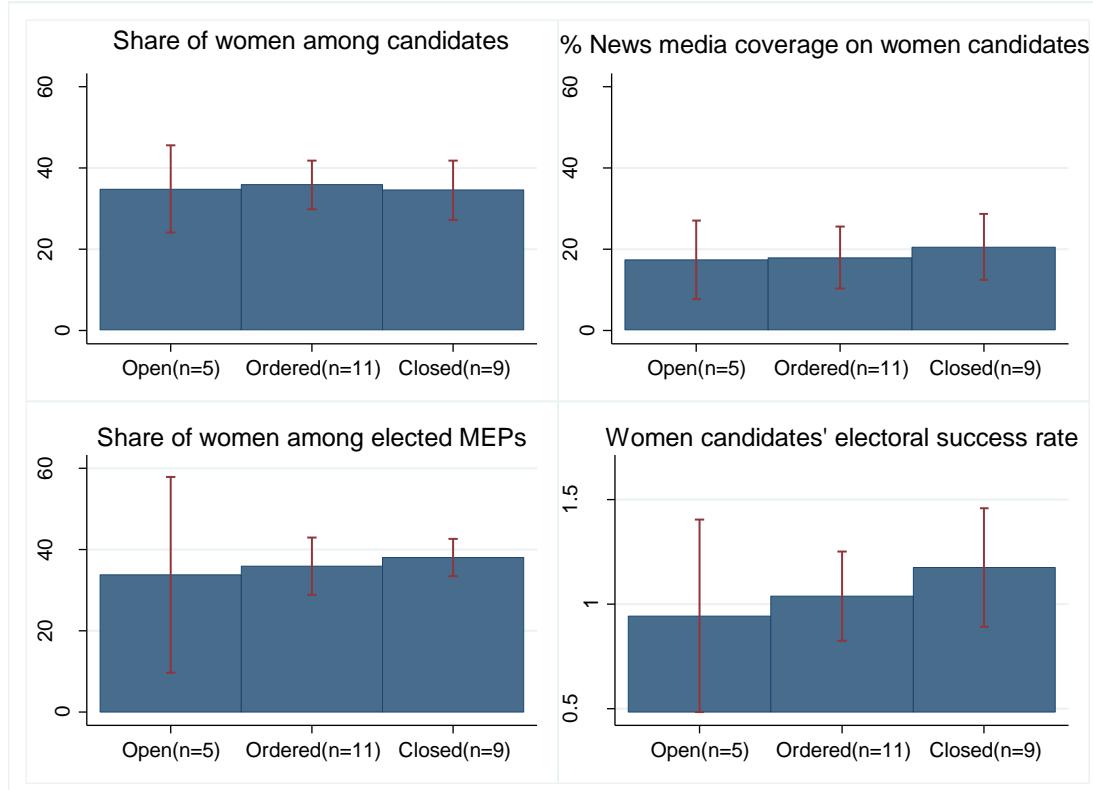
In terms of women's candidacy, voting system does not appear to have any effect in either 2004 or 2009 (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2). While the type of voting system does not affect women's news media visibility in 2009, we can see some slight differences in 2004, where women gain on average almost 30 per cent of the total MEP news media coverage in open list systems but only about 20 per cent in closed list systems. Also other effects are not consistent from one election to another. While in 2004 women had the lowest electoral success rate in ordered list systems, in 2009 women had the hardest time being elected in open list systems. In both elections women appear to have slightly higher chances of being elected in closed list systems than in open or ordered list systems. However, since the error regions of the three groups

overlap in all figures, the mean values of different types of voting systems are not statistically significantly different from one another.

**Figure 4.1: Women's presence in the 2004 EP elections by voting system**



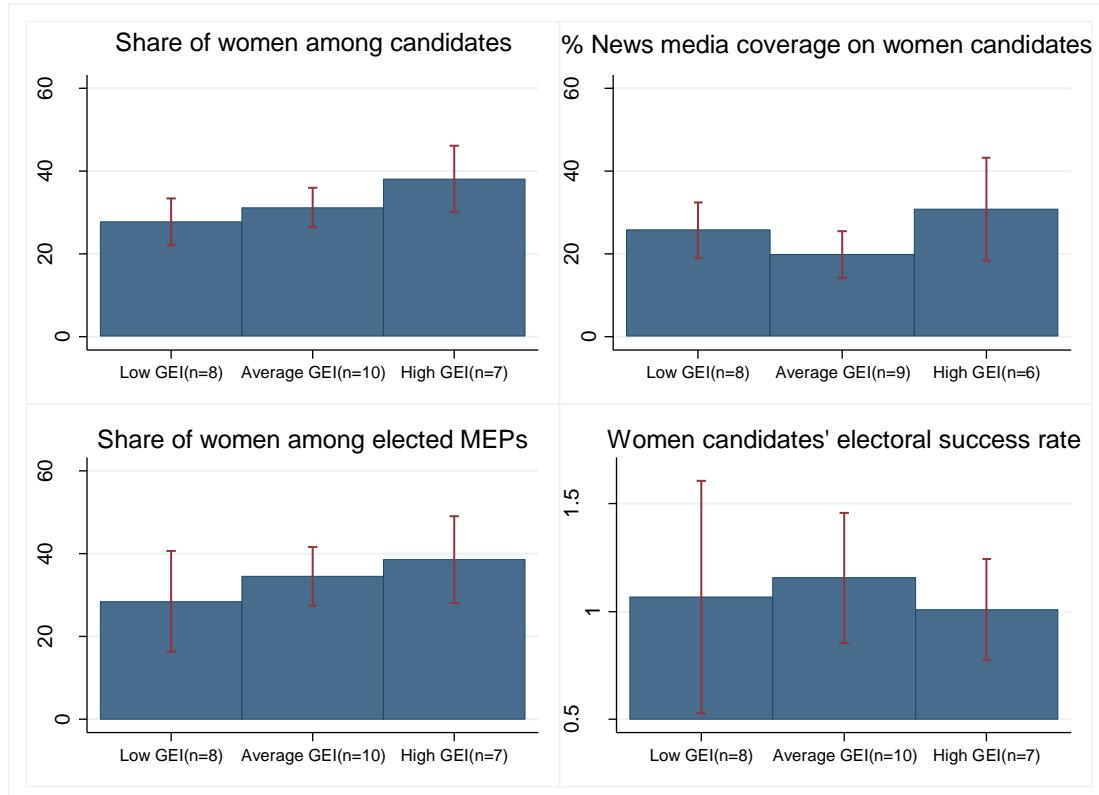
**Figure 4.2: Women's presence in the 2009 EP elections by voting system**



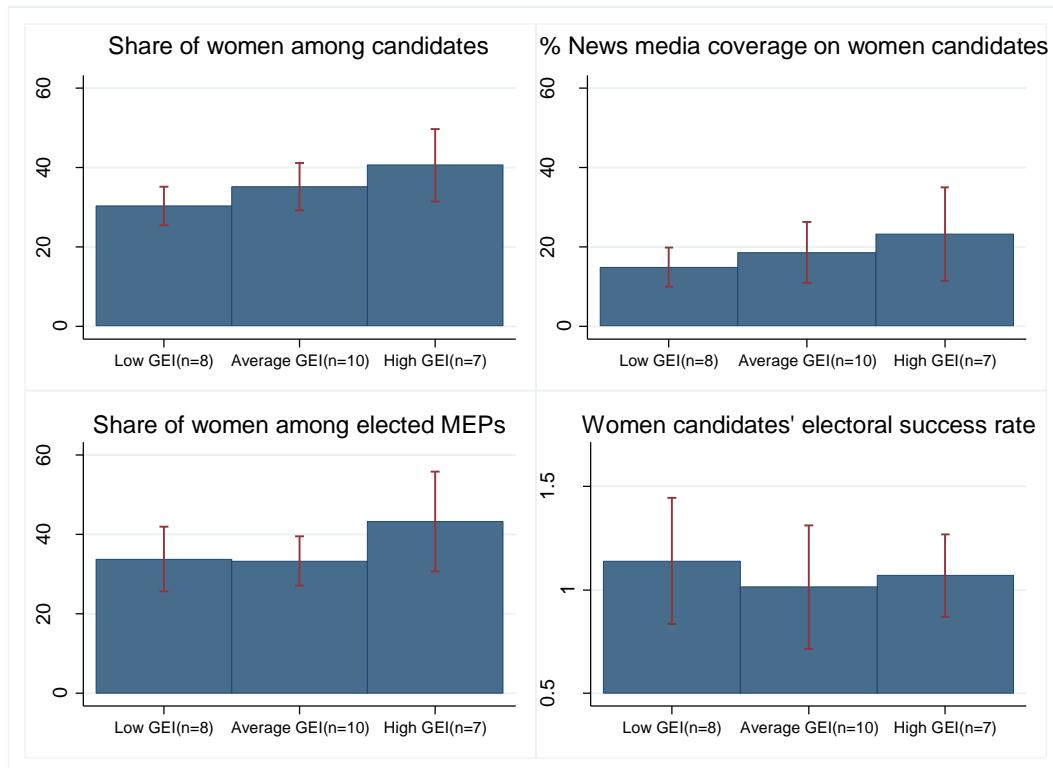
Figures 4.3 and 4.4 depict the changes in the mean values of women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate across countries with different levels of overall gender equality. Both figures show that the more equal men and women are in the society, the higher the proportion of women candidates and representatives. However, the effect of gender equality appears somewhat stronger on women's candidacy than on women's descriptive representation. This is further illustrated by the electoral success graphs, which show that women can enjoy relatively higher electoral success rates in countries with moderate or low levels of gender equality. Thus, even if higher levels of gender equality increase the share of women among candidates it does not increase equally their share among elected representatives. This could partly be due to the fact that media and voters may not endorse female candidacy as strongly in more gender equal societies as parties do. Similarly to previous figures, also the group means on Figures 4.3 and 4.4 are not

statistically significantly different from one another as the error regions in all plots overlap. However, in order to shed more light on these relationships multivariate analysis is necessary.

**Figure 4.3: Women's presence in the 2004 EP elections by gender equality**



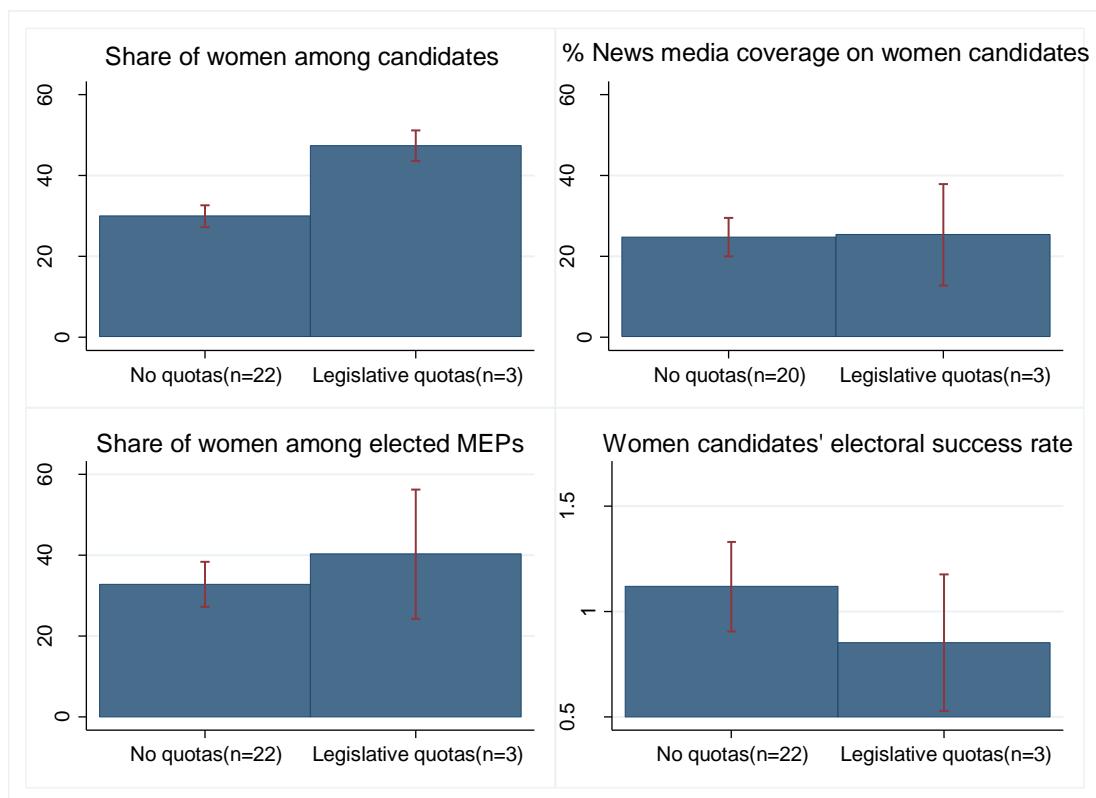
**Figure 4.4: Women's presence in the 2009 EP elections by gender equality**



Figures 4.5 and 4.6 are perhaps the most interesting, presenting the relationships between legislative candidate gender quotas and women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate. Both 2004 and 2009 data show that in countries that employ legislative candidate quotas women are more often selected to be MEP candidates than in countries without such measures. These results are also statistically significant at 95 per cent confidence level. However, it is at candidacy where the effect of legislative candidate quotas appears to end. Figures 4.5 and 4.6 show either no effect of legislative gender quotas or rather a negative effect on both women's news media visibility and women's descriptive representation. This means that these legislative quota policies do not reduce gender bias in the news media or at election booths. In sum, as legislative quotas only increase the share of women among candidates but not among representatives, women in countries with quota legislation have relatively lower electoral success rates than women in countries with no

such legislation. It could be because in the majority of these countries do legislative quotas work with highly effective placement mandates, and thus there are little legal requirements for party gatekeepers not only to promote women's candidacy but also to place women in highly viable electoral list positions. However, in order to test this hypothesis, individual level analysis needs to be conducted. Thus, I will revisit this expectation in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven.

**Figure 4.5: Women's presence in the 2004 EP elections by quota legislation**



**Figure 4.6: Women's presence in the 2009 EP elections by quota legislation**

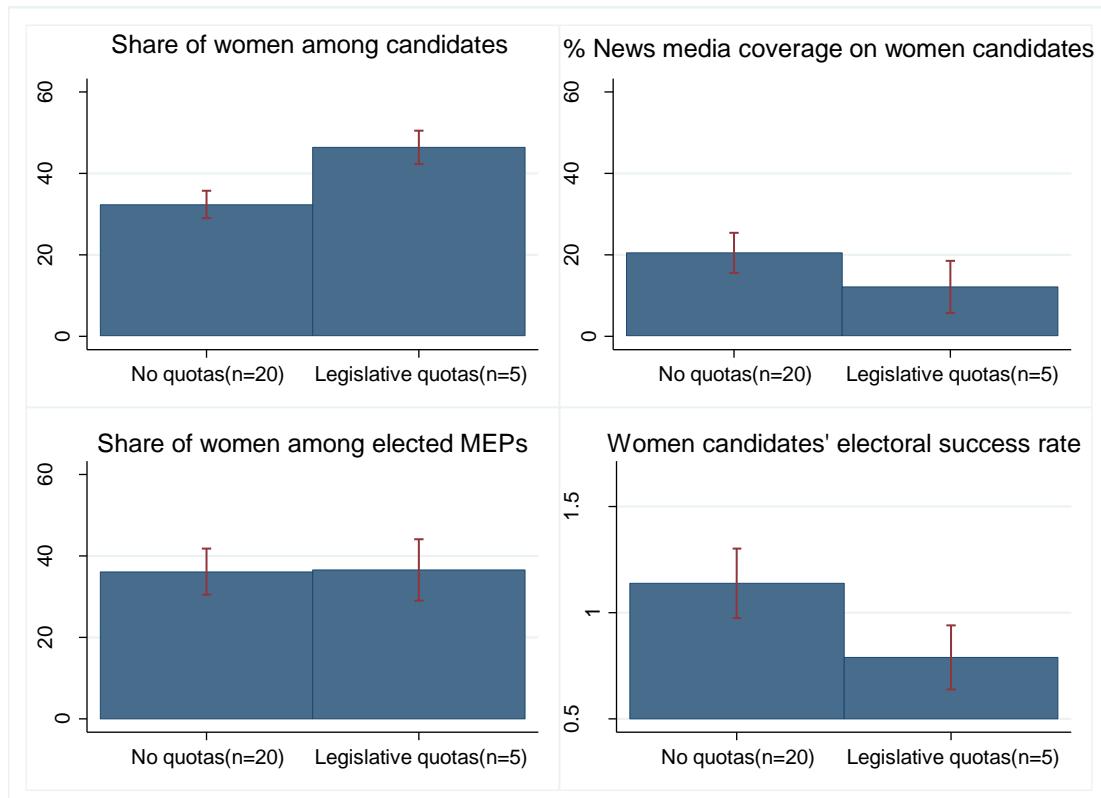


Table 4.4 summarises the results of multivariate analysis. The majority of the findings are in line with the expectations presented in Table 4.1. However, while most of the effects are in the expected direction, not all reach traditional levels of statistical significance. The insignificance of many results can, at least partly, be attributed to the very small sample size (48 observations). Nevertheless, based on the data from the European Parliamentary elections one would draw similar inferences as presented by previous literature that has primarily relied on first-order national elections. This should increase our confidence in using the data collected during the European Parliamentary elections in this research.

As shown in Table 4.4, preference voting has a positive effect on women's candidacy but a negative effect on women's news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate (many of the coefficients are not statistically significant). In other words, while political parties may field more women candidates in

open and ordered list systems compared to closed list systems, women are likely to have easier access to news media coverage and an elected seat in a system without the preference vote option. While women are not disadvantaged at statistically significant levels in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems, there are fewer women elected in open list systems compared to closed list systems. These results are, in fact, well in line with previous research that suggests that women have higher levels of descriptive representation in non-preference voting systems (Matland 2005; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003)<sup>7</sup>.

The aggregate level analysis also shows that women have a higher share among candidates and elected representatives in more gender equal societies (see Table 4.4). These results, too, are well in line with the expectations posed in the beginning of the Chapter as well as with past findings (see for example, Jones 2009; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Tripp and Kang 2008). While all the gender equality index coefficients have a positive sign, overall levels of gender equality have a statistically significant impact on women's news media visibility only. Nevertheless, the results in Table 4.4 suggest that the more equally employment, pay, socio-economic power, and free time is divided between men and women, the higher chances for representation women have in the political sphere.

The central expectations concerning the effect of legislative quotas hold, too. While compulsory candidate gender quotas increase the share of women among candidates by almost 15 percentage points, the strong positive effect does not carry on to women's descriptive representation. As a result, women's electoral success rate is lower in countries that employ legislative gender quotas compared to countries that do not because the ratio between the share of women among elected representatives and the share of women among candidates is negative. It could partly be due to the fact that

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<sup>7</sup> Past research has not distinguished between open and ordered list preference voting systems.

news media do not cover female candidates more in countries that use legislative gender quotas. To the contrary, despite the fact that there are more female candidates to cover, women candidates appear to be 10 percentage points more visible in the news in countries without compulsory gender quota legislation. These findings raise questions, as to why an increased proportion of women among candidates do not increase their news media visibility or their overall descriptive representation. I argued earlier that it is partly due to women candidates' possibly poor electoral list placement. Therefore, I will revisit this puzzle in the following chapters that utilise individual level analysis.

**Table 4.4: Explaining women's presence at the 2004 and 2009 EP elections**

	Women's Candidacy	Women's news media visibility	Women's Descriptive Representation	Women's Electoral Success Rate		
Preference voting: open list	2.28 (2.66)	-5.91 (3.98)	-7.39 (4.15)	*	-0.43 (0.18) *	
Preference voting: ordered list	2.33 (2.39)	-2.98 (3.81)	-5.99 (5.10)		-0.33 (0.21)	
Overall gender equality	3.57 (11.06)	45.96 (19.87)	*	22.86 (18.51)	1.00 (0.86)	
Women's news media visibility			0.12 (0.17)		-0.00 (0.01)	
Legislative quotas	14.67 (2.64)	**	-10.02 (3.54)	**	0.06 (3.93)	-0.48 (0.15) **
Strength of Left/Liberal ideology	0.10 (0.07)		0.11 (0.10)		0.17 (0.09) +	0.00 (0.00)
% women in national parliament	0.28 (0.10)	*	0.04 (0.17)		0.38 (0.16) *	0.00 (0.01)
District magnitude	0.04 (0.03)		-0.14 (0.05)	**	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.00) *
Election year: 2009	2.17 (0.91)	*	-5.67 (2.66)	*	3.02 (2.95)	-0.01 (0.12)
Constant	13.95 (6.63)	*	0.41 (14.39)		7.80 (11.75)	0.90 (0.45) +
N	48	48	48	48		
N of clusters	25	25	25	25		
R2	0.73	0.44	0.42	0.30		
Root MSE	4.89	8.43	9.92	0.38		

\*\* p < 0.01; \* p < 0.05; + p < 0.10. Robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

The results in Table 4.4 also provide a weak signal that the more visible female candidates are in the news media, the higher levels of descriptive representation women enjoy. However, these results are not statistically significant. Other control variables, too, show in general the same direction of effects as in past literature. Both women's collective political experience (proportion of women in national legislatures) and the relative electoral strength of left-wing, liberal, and green parties have a positive effect on both women's candidacy and descriptive representation. The effect of district magnitude on women's electoral presence is somewhat less in line with some of the past research. However, Norris and Franklin (1997), who relied in their analysis on the data from the European Parliamentary elections, also found no positive impact of district magnitude on women's representation. This is likely due to the fact that district magnitude at European elections does not only capture the number of elected officials per constituency but also the size of the country. Therefore, I will reconsider the measurement of district magnitude in future chapters. For now, it is beyond the scope of this Chapter to understand why women candidates appear to receive more news media coverage and have higher chances for electoral success in smaller EU member states compared to bigger ones.

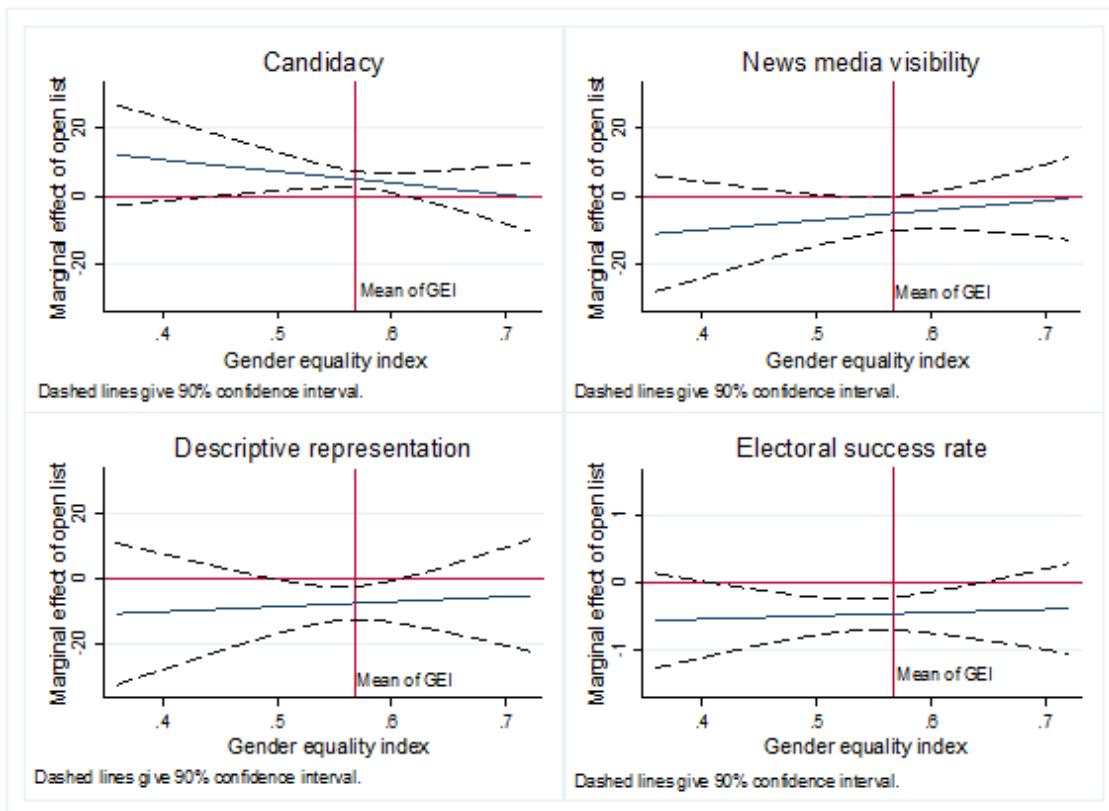
Besides the main effects, it is also likely that certain variables interact with each other when explaining women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate. As mentioned above, due to a very small number of cases, it is not possible to test the interaction effect of a country's voting system and quota legislation in this Chapter. However, one could also expect other interaction effects. For example, it is possible that the effect electoral laws have on women's electoral presence and success depends on how gender equal the society is. In other words, the overall levels of gender equality in a society may condition how strongly the type of voting system predicts women's candidacy, news media visibility,

descriptive representation and / or electoral success rate. It is likely that in more gender equal societies women have better access to all of the aforementioned institutions and thus the effect of the voting system is likely to be weaker in more gender equal societies.

Figures 4.7 and 4.8 show how overall gender equality may condition the effect of preference voting systems. Figure 4.7 indicates that women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate have the same levels in different open list voting systems, regardless of how equal men and women are across countries that employ open list preference voting. However, Figure 4.8 displays that women receive relatively less news media coverage in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems only if the overall levels of gender equality are lower than the European average ( $p<0.05$ ). Overall gender equality does not affect statistically significantly women's candidacy, descriptive representation, and women's aggregate electoral success rate.

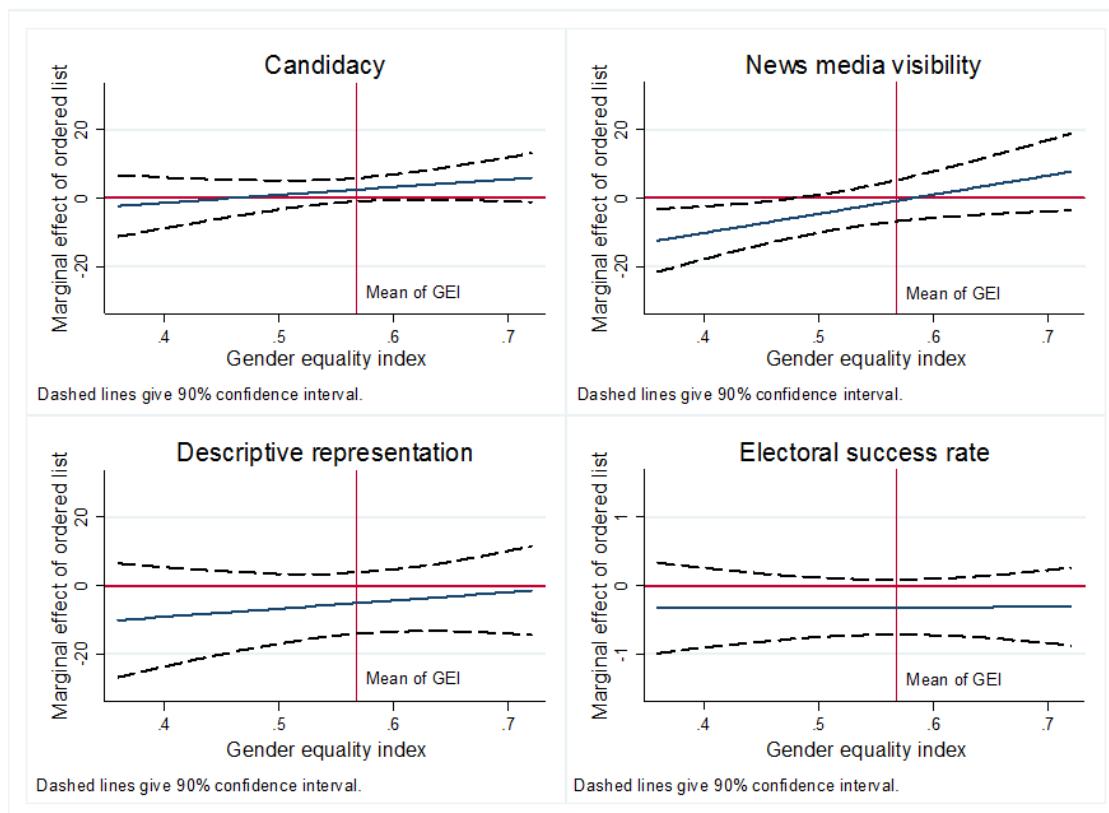
These results presented in Table 4.4 and on Figures 4.7 and 4.8, thus suggest that the most likely mechanism of how gender equality affects the election of women at the aggregate level is through news media coverage. Gender equity appears to have little influence on the supply of female candidates or on how voters perceive women candidates. However, the fact that the news media cover women more in more gender equal societies indicates that news media seems to respond to audience preferences with regards to gender equality.

**Figure 4.7: Interaction effects of open lists and gender equality on women's presence at the 2004 and 2009 EP elections**



Note: Figures illustrate the marginal effect of open list preferential voting system on women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate over different levels of gender equality. Estimates are derived from the models reported in Table 4.4.

**Figure 4.8: Interaction effects of ordered lists and gender equality on women's presence at the 2004 and 2009 EP elections**



Note: Figures illustrate the marginal effect of ordered list preferential voting system on women's candidacy, news media visibility, descriptive representation, and electoral success rate over different levels of gender equality. Estimates are derived from the models reported in Table 4.4.

#### 4.5 Final comments

As covered in Chapter Two, many scholars report that women have higher levels of descriptive representation in countries that employ non-preferential closed list voting systems (Matland 2005; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Schmidt 2009), where overall gender ideology is women friendly (Jones 2009; Matland 2005; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Tripp and Kang 2008), and where parties on the left have more power (Caul 1999; Norris and Franklin 1997; Reynolds 1999). Furthermore, Caul (1999 and 2001) also suggests that candidate gender quotas may be beneficial for the election of women, while Jones (2009) and Tripp and Kang (2008) find from their

data that candidate quotas only increase women's descriptive representation if they are combined with placement mandates and closed list proportional electoral systems. The vast majority of this past research has drawn these inferences from data collected during national (first-order) elections. As this research relies on data from European Parliamentary elections, both academically and publically considered a second-order election, it has been necessary to test whether the relationships stated above also appear in the context of the EP elections.

The data from the 2004 and 2009 European Parliamentary elections show similar relationships. While the results demonstrate that there are fewer women than men among candidates, in the news media, and among elected representatives, women do not on average fare worse than men in terms of electoral success rate. In other words, if women run for political office they have on average the same chances of being elected to office as men. However, the main problem lies in the fact that women do not compete for an elected seat as often as men and that under certain conditions women face more obstacles in turning their candidacy into an elected seat.

So, what promotes women's candidacy and women's electoral success? As past research suggests and the data used in this Chapter confirms, the share of women among candidates and representatives is higher in countries where men and women are more equal to each other. Furthermore, while there may be more women candidates in countries that use preferential voting systems instead of closed lists, women's news media visibility, descriptive representation and thus their likelihood for electoral success is higher in countries that employ non-preference voting systems. However, the negative effect of preference voting is somewhat flattened in countries where gender equality is high.

It is also important to notice that this Chapter shows how different institutional and contextual predictors have varying effects on women at different stages of the

election. This is perhaps most prevalent in the case of candidate gender quotas. While in countries with compulsory legislative candidate quotas women's share among candidates is higher, there is no similar effect in terms of women's news media visibility, descriptive representation, or electoral success rate. In fact, women candidates receive significantly less news media coverage and have significantly lower electoral success rates in countries that apply candidate gender quota legislation than in countries that do not. Thus, in order to shed more light into how different factors affect women's election, it is important to investigate the process of election in several stages.

Most importantly, this Chapter demonstrates that at the aggregate level, data from second-order elections (in this case, European Parliamentary elections) reveal similar relationships between various institutional and contextual variables and the election of women as data from first-order elections. This has also been noted by past research which has found that the factors associated with the representation of women in national legislatures also hold at second-order regional and local elections (see for example, Vengroff et al. 2003). Therefore, the inferences I will make based on unique individual level data in the following chapters are perhaps not only telling us about the election of women in the European Parliament but also about women's electoral success in general. In other words, this aggregate level evidence that similar factors affect the election of women in both national legislatures and in the European Parliament give more confidence in the EES data and in the inferences drawn from these data in respect to this thesis' central research questions.

In sum, while this aggregate level analysis tells us something about how legislative quotas, voting system rules, and overall gender equality work at different stages of election, a number of questions remain. For example, why do women fare better in closed lists than in preference voting systems? Why does the positive effect of legislative gender quotas not reach beyond women's candidacy? Why does the news

media cover women relatively less than men, especially in countries with quota legislation? As argued in the previous chapters of the thesis, an individual level approach is likely to help us answer these questions because only this way is it possible to account also for candidate and party level variables, next to institutional and contextual predictors.

## **PART V – EXPLAINING THE ELECTION OF WOMEN AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL**

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## 5 WOMEN'S LIKELIHOOD OF VIABLE CANDIDACY

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*In comparing the social composition of parliaments we can draw a distinction between the larger pool of aspirants who are interested in pursuing elected office, the smaller group of candidates who are nominated to stand, and the smallest group of legislators who are elected into parliaments. Like a game of musical chairs, some fall by the wayside at every stage of the process. If the recruitment process involves a totally neutral competition for office, then parliaments will perfectly mirror the supply of aspirants who come forward. But unless MPs are picked at random, the recruitment process filters some over others, on a systematic basis*

*(Norris 1997: 5).*

Aggregate level data presented in Chapter 4 indicates that several predictors of women's descriptive representation also affect the share of women among candidates. For example, there are more female candidates and representatives in countries where in general women and men are more equal to each other. At the same time, while quota legislation has a positive impact on women's candidacy it fails to predict women's descriptive representation. Also, comparison of the share of women among candidates

and the share of women among elected representatives revealed that the share of women among candidates does not fully explain the share of women among elected representatives. I argue in this Chapter, that this is primarily due to the fact that not all candidates are equal to one another in terms of likelihood of getting elected. Furthermore, this “inequality” is primarily created by party gatekeepers who endorse some candidates more than others by ranking them in different electoral list positions.

By candidate viability I understand the extent to which a candidate has been provided with a competitive starting position by her party. It describes the situation being either right or wrong for the candidate: being positioned high up the list at a winnable seat or positioned at the bottom of the electoral list as a hopeless candidate. Hence, I distinguish candidate viability from individual qualities, such as political experience, ambition, etc., that candidates possess intrinsically by themselves.

While in majority/plurality systems parties determine individual candidate's viability by deciding which constituency she runs in, in PR list systems (with ranked electoral lists) parties determine individual candidate's viability by her electoral list standing. The electoral list standing is especially crucial for election in closed list systems while it also matters in ordered list systems. Substantially, the list ordering determines which candidates actually have a chance of winning elected office. This party-determined likelihood of being elected is what I consider, in this thesis, to be candidate viability.

Since candidates differ from each other in terms of their party-determined viability (how likely their electoral list position is converted into an elected seat) I assume that party gatekeepers may use different strategies when composing the top of the list than when ranking candidates further down the list. It is reasonable to assume that the competition for the bottom of the electoral list in PR list systems is not as fierce as the competition for being nominated in the top of the party's electoral list. In fact,

men and women who are nominated to run in the last list positions know that their likelihood of getting elected in closed list systems is zero and in ordered list systems close to zero. One could compare the candidates placed on the bottom of the party lists in ordered and closed lists systems with so-called “sacrificial lambs” in first-past-the-post systems. In the latter systems, “sacrificial lambs” are candidates whom the party nominates to run in constituencies where they have little or no chance of winning (Berch 2004; Gertzog and Simard 1981). In PR list systems, in which rank ordered candidate lists are used, candidates further down the list can be considered as “sacrificial lambs” or hopeless candidates. Hence, considering the party-determined inequality between candidates, I find it necessary to pay special attention, next to general candidate selection, to whom party gatekeepers select as the most viable candidates and whom they “sacrifice” in the bottom of the list.

The classics of candidate selection, however, discuss the issue more in general. Gallagher and Marsh (1988) aptly referred to candidate selection as “the secret garden of politics”. It is, at the same time, one of the most influential and perhaps least public decisions taken in parties. By the 1960s, political scientists had already been considering candidate selection as a crucial part of the political process. Crotty (1968) summarises the importance of candidate selection by claiming that the party’s candidate recruitment not only determined the personnel, but more symbolically also the groups to be represented among the decision-making elite. In this sense, candidate recruitment represents one of the key linkages between the voters and the policy-making process. This statement could be understood as an argument that the process of politically representing women does not start with voting for women, but rather with selecting women to be candidates. Candidate selection not only determines the choices given to voters – which influences how the vote choice is perceived and made – but it also determines the composition of the parties in the legislature (Hazan and Voerman 2006).

Consequently, the contest over candidate recruitment is generally even more intense than the struggle for control over the party manifesto (Gallagher and Marsh 1988).

As there are no well-defined requirements or job descriptions, theoretically anyone could become a politician. While many individuals rise to an elected seat by following a career within the political party, others enter into political elites from bureaucracy, media, academia, or business. Since there are several paths to becoming a politician, it is the party gatekeepers' role to select when and how someone can enter the door of candidacy. But as mentioned earlier, party gatekeepers not only define individual careers but also the diversity of the legislative body. Norris (1997) claims that the filtering process of candidate selection executed by political parties, which tends to favour the affluent middle-aged man more than anyone else, keeps reinforcing amongst other things the gender imbalance in elected offices.

In this Chapter, I look at a more specific aspect of candidate selection: which types of candidates are placed by party-gatekeepers on viable electoral list positions. While there is little question about the importance of candidate selection in the representative process, determining viable candidates is what really matters. It is one thing to include women, youth, and ethnic minority representatives in the electoral list and quite another to include them in rank positions where they hold a realistic chance of getting elected. As explained in Chapter Three, in PR list systems where rank ordering is crucial (closed list and ordered list systems), party-determined candidate viability is likely to be one of the strongest predictors of individual electoral success. Therefore, in order to understand the election of women more broadly, it is important to identify how and why women are “selected” or not “selected” as viable candidates.

Essentially, past research (as well as results from Chapter 4) explains what increases the proportion of women among candidates and what increases the proportion of women among elected representatives. However, what is missing is the middle part:

what affects women's party-determined viability in PR list systems where prior rank ordering matters. This Chapter and Chapters Six and Seven aim to demonstrate that this party determined candidate viability is important because it is a necessary precondition of being elected in ordered and closed list PR list electoral systems.

In this Chapter, I pay special attention to how women's chances for party-determined viable candidacy may vary under different electoral rules and in different contextual settings. Norris (1997) claims that the political systems, in particular the legal regulations, electoral rules, and system of party competition within each country set the structure of opportunities for political careers and these structures of opportunities may have different impacts on varying types of aspirants. For example, party gatekeepers may position different types of candidates as viable candidates under different electoral rules. In this Chapter, I take the argument further by claiming that the combination of different electoral rules and candidate selection procedures affects female candidates positioning in electoral lists, too. Also past research shows that "with different electoral systems we could, and probably would, see different kinds of candidates" (Hazan and Voerman 2006: 148). Parties may take into consideration elements such as electability, representation, incumbency, and cohesion, to a different degree under varying electoral rules when producing their lists. Current literature offers, however, little insight into how the combination of certain electoral rules and candidate selection procedures affects women's party-determined viable (and hopeless) candidacy.

Therefore, the aim of this Chapter is to investigate what types of candidates are positioned by party-gatekeepers as viable candidates in varying institutional and contextual settings. I believe that by answering these questions, we will also have a better understanding of the conditions under which women have higher chances to be elected.

## **5.1 Expectations and hypotheses**

In this section, I present some generic expectations and hypotheses that structure the analysis in this Chapter (see Table 5.1 for summary). As I study women's likelihood of being positioned in electoral lists as viable candidates, many variables predicting the likelihood of electoral success are omitted in this stage of research. For example, as electoral lists are composed by party gatekeepers before campaigning I do not expect candidate's individual campaign effort or the amount of news media coverage she attracts (important predictors of being elected) to influence her party's decision in the viable candidate selection phase. While past literature on candidate selection in the United States emphasises the role of financial resources a prospective candidate has or is able to raise (Herrnson 1997), scholars studying candidate selection in PR list systems pay less attention to it (see for example, Gallagher and Marsh 1988). Generous contributions to a political party could increase an aspirant's chances of being granted with a highly viable candidacy in PR list systems too, but past research on PR list systems has largely omitted the role of money in candidate selection. Based on past studies and on the difficulty of measuring individual donations to a political party prior to candidate selection, I have to exclude the impact of candidate donations to the party from the analysis.

Past research identifies four groups of variables affecting aspirants' chances in the candidate selection process: (i) individual characteristics summarising the traits the selectors are looking for in a candidate; (ii) party rules concerning who and at what level can elect / appoint candidates; (iii) institutional settings conditioning the selectors' choices; and (iv) wider contextual settings and selectors' perception of voter preferences (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Hazan and Voerman 2006; Katz 1980; Norris 1997). Since the focus of this Chapter is on viable candidates, I proceed by covering the main expectations I have of how these traditional predictors of candidate selection affect the

likelihood of women to be placed by party-gatekeepers as viable candidates. It is also important to note that while the classic works on candidate selection examine the likelihood of aspirants to become a candidate, in this Chapter I study what distinguishes a viable candidate from all other candidates. Therefore, the initial pool of cases from which viable candidates are “selected” is not all aspirants but all candidates.

### *5.1.1 Individual characteristics that the selectors are looking for*

While most political parties do not have a set of formal requirements prospective candidates need to meet, there are nevertheless a set of features identified by past research that increase individuals’ chances of being selected. We know that party gatekeepers value candidates with traits such as incumbency and political experience (within party or local elected offices), party loyalty, and roots in the district they ought to represent (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Shugart et al. 2005). Gallagher and Marsh (1988) also emphasise the demographic characteristics of potential candidates. Especially in PR list electoral systems the selectors’ concern is not so much to maximise any one demographic characteristics but to balance a number of them on the ticket because any gross underrepresentation of certain groups is likely to be brought to their attention by the underrepresented group or by other parties.

However, Gallagher and Marsh (1988) also note that parties often use the lower, electorally hopeless places on the list for producing a balanced ticket. Therefore, while *being a woman* may increase an aspirant’s chance of being selected as a candidate it is not likely to increase her chances of being granted with a viable candidacy. It can be seen as parties giving hopeless slots for pseudo-representation to women who are nevertheless likely to remain underrepresented among the realistic and viable candidates. Also, past research concentrating on the US House Elections and British General Elections provide evidence that women are overrepresented among hopeless

candidates (see for example, Deber 1982; Gertzog and Simard 1981; Ryan et al. 2010). Hence, while party gatekeepers in different electoral systems include more women among candidates than ever before, women more often than men are “allowed” by parties to run for seats that are not winnable and thus “sacrifice” their candidacy. This leads me to expect that women candidates are likely to be underrepresented among viable candidates.

In this Chapter, I expect *inc incumbency* and *extensive political experience* to increase candidate’s chances of being granted with a viable candidacy. Past research considers incumbency as a key trait that increases an aspirant’s chances of being selected as a candidate (Gallagher and Marsh 1998; Norris 1997; Shugart et al. 2005; Valdini 2012). Gallagher and Marsh (1988: 248) conclude that “the most widely valued are aspirants’ track records in the party organisation and in the constituency /.../ the best type of record, of course, is to be an incumbent deputy.” I argue that the advantage of incumbency extends to viable candidacy, too. Incumbents usually have an organisational base within the party and a (positive) track record in the office which is likely to secure a place at the top rather than at the bottom of the party’s electoral list. Therefore, I expect incumbents and candidates with extensive political experience to have a higher likelihood of being placed at viable electoral list positions.

Since in most countries the entire country is a single constituency in the European Parliamentary elections and each representative is expected to represent the country rather than any particular region of the country, there is little or no variation between candidates in terms of *possessing roots in the district*. Nearly all MEP candidates are the citizens of and have lived most of their lives in their respective countries. This leaves me to omit this variable from the analysis. However, I do include measures of *political ambition* when explaining viable candidacy. It is likely that candidates who express high levels of political ambition (especially for becoming a

member of the European Parliament) may fight for their electoral list position more and in turn be granted with a more viable list position than candidates who show little or no apparent motivation to become an MEP.

### 5.1.2 Parties' candidate selection rules

Different parties apply varying candidate selection rules, which are likely to affect the outcome of candidate selection, too. Rahat and Hazan (2001) distinguish four dimensions of candidate selection: (i) candidacy (who can run), (ii) *the inclusiveness of the selectorate* (who can vote / choose), (iii) *decentralisation* (whether candidates are selected on local, regional, or national level), and (iv) voting vs. appointment (whether all candidates are selected by a voting procedure). In all European Union member states both men and women can run for office and in the vast majority of cases the candidate selection is decided by voting rather than by appointment. Hence, there are few differences in terms of these two variables. However, there are apparent variations in regards to the remaining two dimensions of candidate selection. These two latter dimensions, centralisation versus decentralisation and inclusiveness versus exclusiveness of the candidate selection process, also to some extent overlap. A more centralised process often implies a more exclusive selectorate. However, this is not always the case, because a system in which 1000 party members select the candidate nationally is more centralised and inclusive than a system in which each candidate is selected by one local leader (Lundell 2004). This makes it necessary to include both variables in the analysis.

But how should these varying candidate selection rules adopted by parties affect women candidates' chances to become a viable candidate? The literature on women's descriptive representation expects more centralised and institutionalised party organisation to support the election of women (Caul 1999). Based on this expectation, I

assume that centralised candidate selection procedures also increase women's likelihood of being granted with a viable candidacy more than decentralised candidate selection. In the case of centralised candidate selection different interest groups within the party, such as women's factions, are likely to be more organised and thus stronger in pursuing support for specific candidates. If, however, candidate selection takes place locally, women may not yield the critical mass in the selectorate to be able to support viable female candidacy.

However, greater inclusiveness of the selectorate is likely to have the opposite effect. The literature on preference voting argues that one of the reasons why less women are elected in preference voting systems compared to closed list voting systems is due to the fact that party elites "understand" better than the wider masses the necessity of women's representation (Matland 2005). Based on this assumption, women should have a higher likelihood of being positioned in the electoral lists as viable candidates if the selectorate is more exclusive. Also, a more exclusive selectorate is more easily held responsible for their decisions by a party's women factions.

### *5.1.3 The structure of opportunities: institutional setting*

As noted above, parties are not entirely independent in their decision of "selecting" (viable) candidates. The electoral rules condition and constrain the parties' menu of choices concerning candidate selection (Hazan and Voerman 2006). The central institutional variable of interest in this thesis is the specific voting system used in PR list electoral systems. Since in open list preferential systems parties select candidates but do not determine their viability (no prior list ranking is employed), I exclude open list systems from the analysis in this Chapter. However, I believe it is necessary to study women's viable candidacy across ordered and closed list systems to

better understand possible differences in the election of women between these two types of voting systems.

Current literature offers little insight into how the combination of certain electoral rules and candidate selection procedures affect women candidates' chances of being granted with a viable candidacy. It is likely that female candidates are faced with different chances for viable candidacy in a situation (i) in which only parties determine individual candidate's viability (closed lists), or (ii) where parties determine individual candidate's viability but voters can change it with preference votes (ordered lists). We could assume that women's likelihood for viable candidacy varies in different voting systems because parties are likely to balance their ticket differently in closed and ordered list systems.

*Closed party lists* put the responsibility on the political party to balance the representation of different demographics, interests, and groups among candidates. In such a system, different factions in the party, e.g. women's faction, are likely to put pressure on party gatekeepers not only to include enough women in electoral lists but to ensure women have viable list positions. As list position determines everything in closed lists systems, it also means that these different factions within parties can hold party gatekeepers responsible for their dismal commitment to fielding female candidates and for impeding women's descriptive representation. As party gatekeepers possess extensive powers of determining individual candidate's viability, interest groups within parties may therefore not only argue for general ticket balancing but for balancing the viable part of the electoral list, too. The fact that closed lists systems place the responsibility of fielding viable female candidates solely on parties makes it clear who would be responsible for hindering women's representation. Therefore, I expect women to enjoy relatively competitive ranking in electoral lists in countries that apply closed list systems.

*In ordered list systems* parties affect individual candidate's electoral chances with the initial list placement but, at the same time, they cannot be held solely responsible for impeding women's representation, as voters have the opportunity to change the list order with preference votes. This means that party gatekeepers may have less incentive to include more women in viable list positions because the chain of responsibility is weaker. Moreover, in systems where preference voting is available, party gatekeepers may suggest that women could "make up" their potentially weaker list ranking with preference votes. Past research suggests that any personal characteristic that marks a candidate as distinct from the others in her party, and that allows constituents to identify with candidate, can be seen as a potential advantage in gaining preference votes (Carey and Shugart 1995; Katz 1980; Shugart et al. 2005). In other words, the potential advantage of being a woman in gaining preference votes could be used by party gatekeepers as an excuse to rank women lower in the list than men. I thus expect women to have a higher likelihood of being placed on a viable list position in closed list non-preferential than in ordered list preferential voting systems.

Besides electoral rules, parties' menu of choices in terms of candidate selection is also conditioned by whether the party has adopted or the state has imposed *candidate gender quotas*. Chapter Four provided aggregate empirical evidence that the share of women among candidates is higher in countries which employ legislative candidate quotas. However, the effect of legislative quotas did not carry over to women's descriptive representation (see Table 4.4 on p. 111). Therefore, we could assume that while legislative quotas increase the proportion of women among candidates they may not increase the proportion of women among viable candidates. If legislative quotas increase women's presence among viable candidates, they should also increase the proportion of women among elected representatives, at least in the case of closed list systems. Since aggregate level analysis in Chapter Four did not support this assumption,

I expect women not to have higher chances for party-determined viable candidacy in countries that employ legislative candidate quotas compared to countries that do not.

I assume a similar effect with *voluntary party quotas*. While party quotas, like legislative quotas, define the proportion of women among candidates, they mostly do not define the proportion of women among viable candidates. Therefore, I also hypothesise simple party quotas not to increase female candidates' chances for viable candidacy.

However, quotas that define not only the share of women among candidates but also how different sexes need to be placed in the electoral list should have a different effect on women candidates' party-determined viability. As discussed in Chapter Three, Tripp and Kang (2008) find that *quotas with placement mandates* are the most effective, while general legislative quotas appear the least efficient measure to increase women's descriptive representation. Also Jones (2009) concludes that not all quotas are effective. His study covering 19 Latin American countries suggests that only well-designed quotas which include placement mandate regulations together with a closed list voting system are effective, while quotas without a placement mandate function have weaker or no effects in preference voting systems (Jones 2009). While both Jones (2009) and Tripp and Kang's (2008) study uses women's descriptive representation as dependent variable, I expect candidate quotas to influence viable female candidacy the same way. I therefore hypothesise candidate gender quotas to have a positive effect on women candidates' chances to be granted with viable candidacy only if the quota rule includes a placement mandate measure.

#### *5.1.4 The structure of opportunities: contextual setting*

Besides institutional rules, the *overall gender norms and equality* in the society are likely to affect party gatekeepers' decisions when ranking candidates in the electoral

lists. As demonstrated in Table F in Appendix 2, European Union member states differ from one another considerably in terms of how equally employment, pay, decision-making power, and free time are shared between women and men. In a country where overall levels of gender equality are high, there are not only more potentially viable female candidates but also the expectations within the party and in the society about women's position in the party list are likely to differ from a member state where gender inequality is prevalent and more accepted. Valdini's (2012) recent empirical study supports this assumption. Valdini's (2012) data show that in countries with liberal gender norms more women are selected to be candidates than in countries with traditional gender norms. Overall gender equality is also a strong positive predictor of women's descriptive representation (see, Jones 2009; Matland 2005; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005; Tripp and Kang 2008). Since in more gender equal societies the proportion of women is not only higher among candidates but also among elected representatives, it suggests that women in more gender equal countries are also more likely to be granted by party gatekeepers with a viable candidacy.

Moreover, I expect overall gender equality to condition the effect of other institutional and party level variables, too. For example, we could assume that the effect of a closed list voting system is stronger in countries with higher levels of gender equality than in countries with low levels of gender equality. This could be the case because in the former societies party gatekeepers are likely to face more societal pressure to support viable female candidacy. Valdini (2012) also argues that the electorate has a strong incentive to be attentive to the prevalence of traditional or liberal gender norms in the society and thus balance the ticket accordingly. Since I expect more gendered viable ticket balancing in closed list systems than in ordered list systems, the effect of gender equality is likely to be stronger in countries that employ non-preferential voting.

Table 5.1 summarises the expectations concerning party-determined viable female candidacy explained above.

**Table 5.1: Central expectations of women's party-determined viable candidacy**

Predictors	DV: Women's likelihood of viable candidacy
Female candidate	Negative effect
Preference voting	Negative effect
Overall gender equality	Positive effect
Centralised candidate selection	Positive effect
Inclusive selectorate	Negative effect
All types of legislative quotas	No effect
All types of voluntary party quotas	No effect
Quotas without placement mandate	No effect
Quotas with placement mandate	Positive effect
Individual political experience	Positive effect

## 5.2 Data, measurement, and methods

In this section I introduce in detail the data, operationalisation, and methods used to explain women candidates' chances for viable candidacy.

### 5.2.1 *The 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey data*

This Chapter relies on the 2009 European Election Study (EES) Candidate Survey and general institutional and contextual data. As explained in Chapter Three (see Section 3.4.2, pp. 87-88), the 2009 EES Candidate Study offers a unique data set to examine candidates at the European Elections. Since the sample only excluded insignificant parties or candidates, more than 6500 candidates were contacted, ranging from 29 candidates in Cyprus to 881 in the United Kingdom (Giebler et al. 2010). The mean response rate for all countries combined is 22%, ranging from 4.4% in Bulgaria to

42.9% in Sweden (Giebler and Wessels 2010). There is also a significant variation of response rate by party. This is primarily because candidates of smaller parties were equally or even more inclined to participate in the study than candidates of parties with higher vote shares (Giebler and Wessels 2010). Detailed information on the response rates can be found in the methodological annex of the 2009 EES Candidate Survey (see Giebler and Wessels 2010).

In the majority of cross-national studies, elite surveys in particular, moderately and strongly varying response rates are not unusual. However, they produce certain restrictions and limitations, especially if one wishes to present results by countries or by parties. This restriction should not pose a problem for this research though, because I aim to explain broader patterns and mechanisms of the election of women in PR list systems rather than present any individual country or party specific data. Furthermore, fortunately, there seem to be no systematic patterns of non-response in terms of gender, chance to get elected or in regard to actual electoral success (Giebler et al. 2010). Hence, there is no significant response bias in regard to the central variables of interest.

As mentioned above, candidates from parties with smaller vote share and from countries in which less MEP seats were divided were more inclined to participate in the survey. In order to address the dissimilarities in response rates by country and party, survey weights are used in the analysis. This Chapter utilises a combined weight for party affiliation and the number of MEPs per country in order to increase the representativeness of the analysis. As a result, candidates from larger parties and candidates from Bulgaria, Portugal and Romania are on average more heavily weighted.

Since this Chapter focuses on women candidates' viability in ordered and closed list voting systems only, I utilise responses to the EES Candidate Survey from the 20 EU member states that employ the aforementioned ballot structure. As a result, observations from Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Luxembourg, Poland, and

the Northern Ireland constituency of the United Kingdom are dropped from the sample.

The final sample consists of 1303 respondents, 34% of whom are women.

### 5.2.2 *Dependent variable and method*

The dependent variable of this Chapter is *candidate's party-determined viability*. I use a measure developed by Giebler and Wessels (2010), which combines candidate's individual viability (her list ranking) with her party's overall viability. Alternatively, I could use candidate's electoral list position as a dependent variable. However, this variable would not take into account parties overall electoral viability. If candidate viability is used as an independent variable, one could control with a separate independent variable for party's overall electoral viability. Since in this Chapter candidate's party-determined viability is a dependent variable, the current measurement that combines candidate's individual party-determined viability (her list position) with her party's overall viability seems like the best operationalisation option.

As explained in Chapter Three (see pp. 97-98), the categorisation of the overall viability variable is based on the candidate's list position in relation to the potential number of seats won by her party (Hix et al. 2009). I use this variable instead of original list ranking because it takes into account party's overall viability. Since different parties expect to win varying numbers of elected seats, list ranking alone does not fully explain individual candidate's viability. A candidate who is ranked on list position number three has a high chance of being elected if she runs for a party that expects to win six seats in the constituency, but no chance of being elected if she runs for a party that expects to win one seat in a given constituency. Therefore, dependent on party's overall viability the same list position is likely to mean a different level of individual viability in different parties' lists.

In order to incorporate uncertainty in the measure, the standard deviation of discrepancy between the predictions and the seats that were actually won was calculated for each country. As a result, candidates with a list position below the predicted seats minus one standard deviation were classified as “safe” candidates. Candidates with a list position above the predicted seats plus one standard deviation were classified as “unpromising” candidates, and all other candidates were classified as “doubtful” (Giebler et al. 2010a). 5.7% of the respondents are coded as “safe”, 12.7% as “doubtful”, and 81.6% as “unpromising” candidates (See section Chapter 5 in Appendix 1 for more information).

I treat the party-determined candidate viability measure as an ordinal variable, because a natural ordering exists for these categories (“unpromising” is worse than “doubtful”; “doubtful” is worse than “safe”). It is clear that the dependent variable is categorical and ordered in the nature in which a hopeless (“unpromising”) candidate can be coded as 1, a “doubtful” candidate can be coded as 2, and a “safe” candidate can be coded as 3. It is important to note that when a dependent variable is both categorical and ordinal the distances between categories are unknown, which makes ordinary least squares estimation inappropriate. In order to deal with an ordered categorical variable, it is recommended to employ an ordered logit or probit model (see Green and Long 2000; Long 1997). Long (1997: 115) points out that researchers often treat ordinal dependent variables as if they were interval and the ordinary least squares regression model is used. However, since the assumption that the distance between categories is equal is often violated with an ordered outcome variable, the OLS is likely to lead to misleading results. Hence, Long (1997: 115) suggests, “given the risk, prudent researchers should use models specifically designed for ordinal variables”.

Also, the use of multinomial logistic regression models is in this case inappropriate. Multinomial logistic regression models are designed for nominal

outcomes (Long 1997) and make no explicit use of the fact that the categories are ordered. As the dependent variable used in this Chapter is clearly ordered, the ordered logistic regression models are the most appropriate.

The ordinal regression model is commonly presented as a latent-variable model, defining  $y^*$  as a latent variable ranging from minus infinity to infinity. The structural model for the case of one independent variable is

$$y^* = \alpha + \beta x_i + \varepsilon_i$$

where  $i$  is the observation and  $\varepsilon$  is a random error. The measurement model for binary outcomes is expanded to divide  $y^*$  into  $J$  ordinal categories,

$$y_i = m \text{ if } \tau_{m-1} \leq y_i^* < \tau_m \quad \text{for } m = 1 \text{ to } J$$

where the cutpoints, or distances between categories,  $\tau_1$  through  $\tau_{J-1}$  are estimated (see Long and Freese 2006). In the case of candidate viability, the observed response categories are tied to the latent variable by the measurement model:

$$y_i = \begin{cases} 1 \Rightarrow \text{"unpromising" if } \tau_0 = -\infty \leq y_i^* < \tau_1 \\ 2 \Rightarrow \text{"doubtful" if } \tau_1 \leq y_i^* < \tau_2 \\ 3 \Rightarrow \text{"safe" if } \tau_2 \leq y_i^* < \tau_3 = \infty \end{cases}$$

Therefore when the latent  $y^*$  crosses a cutpoint, the observed category changes (Long and Freese 2006).

An important assumption associated with an ordered logit regression is that the relationship between each pair of outcome groups is the same. In the literature, this is known as the proportional odds assumption or the parallel regression assumption (see Long 1997 for details). If, however, the proportional odds assumption is violated, it is necessary to use different models, such as multinomial or generalised ordered logistic regression, to describe the relationship between each pair of outcome groups. The Brant test (Brant 1990) can be utilised to test the above assumption. While an ordered logit model that does not meet the proportional odds assumption may lead in some cases to incomplete or misleading results (Fu 1998), it is important to distinguish between

statistical and practical significance. If, for example, models with more parameters such as multinomial logit or generalised ordered logistic regression produce substantively similar results to an ordered logit model where proportional odds assumption is violated, it may nevertheless be reasonable to stick with the ordered logit model for the sake of a more straightforward interpretation of the results. The main models used in this Chapter violate the proportional odds assumption to a certain degree. However, the substantive conclusions one would make based on an ordered logit model or an alternative generalised ordered logistic regression model of the influences on women's viable candidacy are very similar. Therefore, I will employ the ordered logit model when explaining the relationships but in order to make sure that no misleading inferences are made, I will also present the general ordered logit model results at the end of the Chapter.

### *5.2.3 Operationalisation of independent variables*

*A candidate's political experience* is based on an index given in the EES Candidate Survey data. This index is based on the following question: "Can you tell us about your political experience? Are you now or have you ever been a member of any of the following bodies? Local representative body; Regional representative body; National representative body; Member of the European Parliament; Member of local government; Member of regional government; Member of national government." For each of the variables each respondent was assigned a value "1" (if she is or has been a member of any of these bodies) or "0" (if she was never a member). The political experience index is measured as the proportion of memberships in relation to the total number of items (for more information, see Giebler et al. 2010). I use a more general and complex measure of political experience instead of a simple incumbency variable because the European Parliamentary elections are supra-national second-order elections.

Therefore, extensive political experience and / or incumbency in other legislative bodies, such as national parliaments, may be as influential a predictor of candidacy and party-determined candidate viability as incumbency in the European Parliament. Moreover, the extensive enlargement of the EU between 2004 and 2007 means that in the newer member states, the distinction between national and European politicians is not evident in the candidate selection phase.

*A candidate's political ambition* is measured with two dichotomous variables: political ambition for European Parliament and political ambition for national parliament. The 2009 EES Candidate Survey items asking where the candidates would like to be in 10 years from now are employed. If a candidate responded that “in 10 years from now I'd like to be” (a) a member of the European Parliament; (b) chair of my party group in the EP; and/or (c) chair of an EP committee, she was assigned a value “1” for European political ambition. Similarly, if a candidate expressed a wish to be in ten years from now (a) a member of national parliament; (b) a chair of parliamentary group; and/or (c) a chair of parliamentary committee, she was assigned a value “1” for national political ambition.

I use the 2009 EES Candidate Survey question “on which level were you nominated as an official candidate for the EP election?” as an indicator of the *centralisation of candidate selection procedures*. I recoded the three categories of the survey item indicating the level of nomination so that the values increase from decentralised to centralised candidate selection: “local level” (1), “regional level” (2), and “national level” (3). More than half of the respondents (57%) are nominated at the national level.

I also rely on candidates' survey responses to measure the *inclusiveness of the selectorate*. I use the original categories of the 2009 EES Candidate Survey, ranging from exclusive to inclusive candidate selectorate: “the executive board of your party”

(1), “appointed party members” (2), “elected party members (delegates)” (3), “all party members” (4), and “voters” (5). Most often candidates are officially nominated by the executive board of their party (43%) or by elected party members (delegates) (22%).

For the analysis, I use a dichotomous variable to distinguish between *ordered list* and *closed list voting systems*, where closed list voting systems is the baseline category (see Table E in Appendix 2 for more details). Also the measurement of *overall gender equality* is the same as described in Chapter Three (see pp. 99-101). In this Chapter I use the original eight indicator gender equality index, which is described in detail in Chapter Three and in Appendix 2 (Table F).

As discussed in Section 5.1.3, it may be important to distinguish between different types of *candidate gender quotas* to fully understand how quota rules affect women’s party-determined viable candidacy. Therefore, in this Chapter I use two groups of quota variables. In the first part of the analysis I distinguish between compulsory legislative quotas and voluntary party quotas, irrespective of whether the quotas include a placement mandate requirement or not. In the second part of the analysis I differentiate quotas without placement mandates from quotas with placement mandates (no distinction between party and legislative quotas is made here). I employ these different types of quota measures to better understand which specific quotas are likely to deliver the intended outcomes. All four quota measures are dichotomous variables, where value “0” indicates no such quota rule and value “1” indicates this specific quota rule (See Tables G and J in Appendix 2 for more information).

In this Chapter I also control for *party ideology* because parties following certain ideologies may be more receptive to fielding viable female candidates than parties at the opposite end of the ideological spectrum. I measure candidate’s party ideology with a dichotomous variable that identifies a membership in a left-wing, liberal or an ecological party with value “1” and a membership in a right-wing or conservative party

with value “0”. Similarly to Chapter Four, I consider a candidate to have a membership in a left-wing, liberal or ecological party if her national party is affiliated with the Social Democrats (PES), Liberals and Liberal Democrats (ALDE), Greens and Regionalists (G-EFA), or to the Communists, Democratic Socialists and the Far Left European Parliamentary party group.

Past research reports that women have higher levels of descriptive representation in constituencies where more seats are divided. Therefore, I also control for district magnitude when explaining women’s viable candidacy. At the European Parliament elections, the more substantive differences between constituencies are not perhaps the number of seats per country but whether the country uses a single constituency or not. I thus employ a dummy variable indicating whether the candidate is running in a country with single (1) or more constituencies (0) as a proxy for district magnitude.

### **5.3 Results and discussion**

In this section I present the results explaining women’s party-determined viable candidacy. Due to the fact that there are a number of different types of candidate gender quotas, I run models in which I distinguish between no quotas, legislative quotas, and voluntary party quotas; and models in which I distinguish between no quotas, simple quotas without placement mandate rule, and quotas with placement mandate rule. I consider it necessary to use these different categories in order to better understand which type of quotas are the most efficient in increasing women candidates’ chances for viable candidacy. Also, the first models do not include covariates describing parties’ candidates selection rules in respect to the level of candidate nomination and the inclusiveness of the selectorate in order to first run models including cases that have missing values for these two survey items.

I run separate models for male and female candidates and compare the differences of the coefficients with Chi Square tests<sup>8</sup>. I apply this approach instead of running a model with all candidates and gender interaction terms because I expect different variances for the two groups.

Tables 5.2 and 5.3 explain both female and male candidates' likelihood of being placed by party gatekeepers as viable candidates, including legislative and voluntary party quotas among explanatory variables. The results show that women are not less likely than men to be viable candidates; the results also hold if a binary model with candidate sex as the only explanatory variable is estimated.

The data presented in Tables 5.2 and 5.3 suggest that individual level variables affect candidates' likelihood of being positioned as a viable candidate. While political experience is a statistically significant positive predictor of party-determined viable candidacy for men, it fails to reach traditional levels of significance for women.<sup>9</sup> Berch's (2004) study on US House Elections shows similar results. Berch (2004) finds that female incumbents face more challenges in being re-elected than male incumbents do.

Candidates who express ambition for national parliaments are less likely to be appointed by party gatekeepers as viable candidates than candidates who show no interest in national politics. However, contrary to expectations, ambitions for becoming a member of the European Parliament increase candidates' chances for viability but decrease it in the case of men in a statistically significant way. The reason for this may

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<sup>8</sup> I use the suest (seemingly unrelated estimation) command in Stata which combines the estimation results – parameter estimates and associated (co)variance matrices – stored under namelist into one parameter vector and simultaneous (co)variance matrix of the sandwich/robust type. Typical applications of suest are tests for intra-model or cross-model hypotheses.

<sup>9</sup> I also estimated models in which I replaced the political experience variable with the incumbency variable. While the incumbency variable reached statistical significance also for women, the coefficient remained significantly larger for men. All other covariates showed no substantive differences whether I ran the model with the political experience or with the incumbency variable.

be because the political ambition survey item asks about the candidate's wish to become an MEP the next ten years. Therefore, the variable does not only measure current but also future political ambition. Also, there is little correlation in the data between political experience and ambition, and the number of candidates who expressed European Parliament ambition far exceeds the number of candidates who were granted with highly viable ("safe") list positions.

Most importantly, however, the results in Tables 5.2 and 5.3 demonstrate that female candidates' likelihood of being placed in the party lists as viable candidates is considerably more dependent on the institutional and contextual setting in which they run than male candidates' likelihood of viability. While both men and women have a higher likelihood of viable candidacy in countries in which the entire country constitutes a single electoral district, male candidates are more immune than female candidates to the conditioning impact of electoral rules and overall gender equality. For women, context matters. A female candidate is 45% more likely to be placed further down the list as a hopeless candidate in a country with the lowest levels of gender equality compared to a country with the highest levels of gender equality, holding all other covariates constant at their mean. On the other hand, a female candidate in the latter country is 29% more likely to be placed as a highly viable ("safe") candidate than a female candidate in the former country, holding all other independent variables constant at their mean. Similarly, women appear to benefit from non-preference voting systems. A female candidate in a country with an ordered list voting system has a 25% higher likelihood of being placed at the bottom of the electoral list as a hopeless ("unpromising") candidate and a 15% lower likelihood of being granted with a highly viable ("safe") candidacy than a female candidate in a closed list system when all other predictors are held constant at their mean.

While the analysis suggests that both individual and contextual level variables affect women candidates' likelihood for viable candidacy differently than men's, it is difficult to explain why this is the case. The fact that men are, in general politically more experienced than women, could partly explain why political experience explains men's chances for viable candidacy but not women's. Also, the same fact that women are in general under-represented in politics is likely to explain why context matters more for women's individual chances of being placed in a viable list position than it does for men's. Female candidates could be seen as the "political underdogs" who need a more favourable context to guarantee a viable list position. At the same time, male candidates, due to the fact that they are the more common political actors, are less sensitive to the context in which they run.

**Table 5.2: Explaining women and men's likelihood of being placed in a winnable position, ordered logit estimates**

	All candidates	Female candidates	Male candidates	Difference between female and male models ( <i>Chi2</i> )	
Female	0.27 (0.25)				
Political experience	1.64 (0.57) **	0.16 (1.09)	2.34 (0.59) **	3.15	+
Political ambition: MEP	-0.58 (0.23) *	-0.31 (0.38)	-0.65 (0.35) +	0.51	
Political ambition: MP	-1.00 (0.34) **	-1.21 (0.42) **	-0.81 (0.31) *	1.28	
Preference voting: ordered list	-0.28 (0.30)	-1.43 (0.51) **	0.10 (0.36)	7.92	**
Gender equality	1.24 (2.17)	7.18 (2.74) **	-1.14 (2.50)	9.87	**
Legislative quotas	0.50 (0.38)	-0.54 (0.44)	0.83 (0.35) *	5.34	*
Voluntary party quotas	1.00 (0.38) **	-0.50 (0.86)	1.55 (0.54) **	2.88	+
Left/liberal/green party	-0.02 (0.36)	0.10 (0.48)	0.08 (0.49)	0.00	
Single constituency	0.91 (0.42) *	1.70 (0.70) *	0.48 (0.24) *	4.48	*
N	1303	445	858		
Level 2 N	20	19	20		
Wald Chi2	132.01(df=10)	73.35(df=9)	92.00(df=9)		
Pseudo R2	0.13	0.13	0.18		

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data

\*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; + p<0.10 (two-tailed tests); robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

**Table 5.3: Explaining the likelihood of being an “unpromising”, “doubtful”, and a “safe” candidate; change in predicted probabilities**

	Female candidates			Male candidates		
	Unpromising	Doubtful	Safe	Unpromising	Doubtful	Safe
Political experience	-0.03	0.01	0.02	-0.47	0.19	0.29
Political ambition: MEP	0.05	-0.02	-0.03	0.09	-0.05	-0.04
Political ambition: MP	0.20	-0.08	-0.12	0.11	-0.06	-0.05
Preference voting: ordered list	0.25	-0.09	-0.15	-0.02	0.01	0.02
Gender equality	-0.45	0.15	0.29	0.07	-0.04	-0.03
Legislative quotas	0.09	-0.04	-0.05	-0.14	0.07	0.06
Voluntary party quotas	0.08	-0.03	-0.05	-0.29	0.14	0.15
Left/liberal/green party	-0.02	0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.00
Single constituency	-0.25	0.10	0.15	-0.07	0.04	0.03

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data

Note: Predicted probabilities derived from estimates in Table 5.2. Change in the predicted probabilities of holding each candidate type for an increase from the minimum to the maximum value of each independent variable, while holding all other independent variables constant at their means.

In line with the expectations, both legislative and voluntary party quotas have no statistically significant or substantive effect on women candidates' chances of being placed on a viable list position. Quite surprisingly, however, male candidates appear to have a 15% higher likelihood of being granted with a highly viable ("safe") candidacy in parties that employ voluntary party quotas than in parties that do not. These results could be an expression of party quotas which do not specify the position in which men and women need to be placed in the list. In order to control for this, I replace the quota variables with the alternative measures.

Tables 5.4 and 5.5 present the models in which I use the alternative candidate quota measures (quotas with or without placement mandate) to explain how likely candidates are placed by party gatekeepers in viable list position. Substantively, there are few differences in the coefficients of other covariates dependent on the quota measures used. The inferences we would make about the effect of individual and contextual variables would be the same based on either Table 5.2 or Table 5.4. The negative effect of preferential voting system (ordered lists) is somewhat weaker for female candidates in a model where I apply the quota measure with placement mandate option than in a model in which I distinguish between legislative and voluntary party quotas. The reason for this could be that placement mandates are in general more common and considered to be more effective (see Jones 2009; Tripp and Kang 2008) in closed list voting systems. Therefore, a more precise quota measure could be explaining some of the variance between different voting systems.

Nevertheless, models reported in Tables 5.4 and 5.5 also suggest that women have a 16% higher likelihood to be placed at the bottom of electoral lists as hopeless ("unpromising") candidates and a 10% lower likelihood of being placed at the top of the list as highly viable ("safe") candidates in ordered list voting systems than in closed list

voting systems, while holding all other independent variables constant at their means.

These percentage points remain relatively large.

Contrary to expectations, however, quotas with placement mandates also do not appear to increase women's likelihood of being granted with viable candidacy. It could be explained perhaps by the fact that most placement mandates used in the EU member states dictate the percentage of either sex in a group of candidates. For example, in the case of Spain, in every five electoral list positions either sex must constitute at least 40% but no more than 60% of the candidates (Quota Project 2010). Therefore, an electoral list in which positions one, two, and three are held by men and four and five by women meets the placement quota requirement. At the same time, relatively fewer seats are divided at the European elections than at national elections. Consequently, if a party has a likelihood of gaining three seats, none of the female candidates are viable. Therefore, quota legislation that may be efficient at national elections may not be as efficient at European Parliamentary elections.

**Table 5.4: Explaining women and men's likelihood of being placed in a winnable position with alternative quota measures, ordered logit estimates**

	All candidates	Female candidates	Male candidates	Difference between female and male models ( <i>Chi2</i> )
Female	0.22 (0.24)			
Political experience	1.60 (0.49) **	0.13 (0.86)	2.63 (0.75) **	3.52 +
Political ambition: MEP	-0.48 (0.24) *	-0.25 (0.35)	-0.60 (0.31) +	0.65
Political ambition: MP	-1.07 (0.40) **	-1.16 (0.41) **	-1.01 (0.45) *	0.13
Preference voting: ordered list	-0.31 (0.30)	-0.92 (0.46) *	-0.17 (0.39)	1.92
Gender equality	0.85 (2.24)	5.01 (2.52) *	-1.31 (2.40)	8.38 **
Simple quotas	0.79 (0.53)	0.38 (0.89)	0.93 (0.54) +	0.40
Quotas with placement mandate	0.84 (0.32) **	0.40 (0.37)	0.71 (0.38) +	0.37
Left/liberal/green party	0.21 (0.36)	0.05 (0.58)	0.46 (0.67)	0.14
Single constituency	1.05 (0.55) +	1.68 (1.12)	0.77 (0.45) +	0.63
N	1303	445	858	
Level 2 N	20	19	20	
Wald Chi2	78.07(df=10)	52.24(df=9)	82.80(df=9)	
Pseudo R2	0.12	0.12	0.14	

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data

\*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; + p<0.10 (two-tailed tests); robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

**Table 5.5: Explaining the likelihood of being an “unpromising”, a “doubtful”, and a “safe” candidate with alternative quota measures, change in predicted probabilities**

	Female candidates			Male candidates		
	Unpromising	Doubtful	Safe	Unpromising	Doubtful	Safe
Political experience	-0.03	0.01	0.01	-0.53	0.17	0.36
Political ambition: MEP	0.04	-0.02	-0.03	0.08	-0.05	-0.04
Political ambition: MP	0.19	-0.08	-0.12	0.14	-0.08	-0.07
Preference voting: ordered list	0.16	-0.06	-0.10	0.02	-0.01	-0.01
Gender equality	-0.32	0.12	0.20	0.08	-0.04	-0.04
Simple quotas	-0.07	0.03	0.04	-0.16	0.08	0.08
Quotas with placement mandate	-0.07	0.03	0.05	-0.12	0.06	0.06
Left/liberal/green party	-0.01	0.00	0.00	-0.07	0.04	0.03
Single constituency	-0.25	0.10	0.15	-0.10	0.06	0.05

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data

Note: Predicted probabilities derived from estimates in Table 5.4. Change in the predicted probabilities of holding each candidate type for an increase from the minimum to the maximum value of each independent variable, while holding all other independent variables constant at their means.

Tables 5.6 and 5.7 present models that also include predictors describing the centralisation and inclusiveness of the candidate selection procedures. Including these independent variables increases the explanatory power of the models considerably. While the number of cases included in the analysis decreases by adding the party level variables in the model, the main effects concerning other independent variables remain substantively the same. Female candidates have a higher likelihood of being placed by party-gatekeepers in viable list positions in countries where women are in general more equal to men and in countries that employ closed list voting system than in countries that do not. However, men remain relatively immune to the context and electoral rules under which they run for office.

Whether candidates are officially nominated by a small group of party executive members or by a more inclusive selection body does not statistically significantly affect women candidates' chances for being placed in winnable list positions. However, unlike male candidates, female candidates' likelihood of viable candidacy is affected by the level of candidate selection. In line with the expectations presented in Section 5.1.2, women candidates are 37% more likely to be hopeless ("unpromising") candidates and 18% less likely to be highly viable ("safe") candidates if they are selected at the local level as opposed to the national level, while holding all other independent variables constant at their means. Therefore, women's party-determined viable candidacy is not only more influenced by the contextual and institutional setting than men's viable candidacy, but the level at which decisions are made by parties affects women more than men, too.

**Table 5.6: Explaining women and men's likelihood of being placed in a winnable position, including party level predictors, ordered logit estimates**

	All candidates	Female candidates	Male candidates	Difference between female and male models ( <i>Chi2</i> )
Female	0.40 (0.32)			
Political experience	1.20 (0.72) +	0.03 (1.32)	2.32 (0.76) **	1.87
Political ambition: MEP	-0.49 (0.26) +	-0.38 (0.38)	-0.72 (0.36) *	0.36
Political ambition: MP	-1.34 (0.47) **	-1.36 (0.43) **	-1.29 (0.51) **	0.03
Preference voting: ordered list	-0.60 (0.31) +	-1.60 (0.60) **	-0.44 (0.39)	3.42 +
Gender equality	0.91 (2.65)	9.10 (3.13) **	-2.35 (2.41)	19.08 **
Simple quotas	0.85 (0.72)	-0.84 (1.17)	1.20 (0.61) +	3.24 +
Quotas with placement mandate	1.10 (0.37) **	0.46 (0.42)	0.99 (0.51) +	1.09
Left/liberal/green party	0.13 (0.49)	0.23 (0.37)	0.43 (0.84)	0.05
Single constituency	0.66 (0.73)	0.72 (1.35)	0.50 (0.55)	0.03
Centralised candidate selection	0.75 (0.45) +	2.05 (0.46) **	0.31 (0.32)	18.64 **
Inclusive electorate	0.05 (0.15)	-0.06 (0.20)	0.12 (0.13)	0.86
N	1020	327	693	
Level 2 N	20	19	20	
Wald Chi2	629.75(df=12)	130.13(df=11)	194.76(df=11)	
Pseudo R2	0.17	0.26	0.20	

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data

\*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; + p<0.10 (two-tailed tests); robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

**Table 5.7: Explaining the likelihood of being an “unpromising”, a “doubtful”, and a “safe” candidate, including party level predictors, change in predicted probabilities**

	Female candidates			Male candidates		
	Unpromising	Doubtful	Safe	Unpromising	Doubtful	Safe
Political experience	-0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.42	0.19	0.23
Political ambition: MEP	0.06	-0.03	-0.03	0.08	-0.05	-0.04
Political ambition: MP	0.20	-0.10	-0.10	0.16	-0.09	-0.07
Preference voting: ordered list	0.22	-0.11	-0.11	0.05	-0.03	-0.02
Gender equality	-0.48	0.21	0.27	0.12	-0.07	-0.05
Simple quotas	0.10	-0.06	-0.05	-0.18	0.10	0.08
Quotas with placement mandate	-0.07	0.04	0.03	-0.14	0.08	0.06
Left/liberal/green party	-0.03	0.02	0.02	-0.05	0.03	0.02
Single constituency	-0.10	0.05	0.05	-0.06	0.03	0.02
Centralised candidate selection	-0.37	0.18	0.18	-0.07	0.04	0.03
Inclusive selectorate	0.03	-0.02	-0.01	-0.06	0.04	0.03

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data

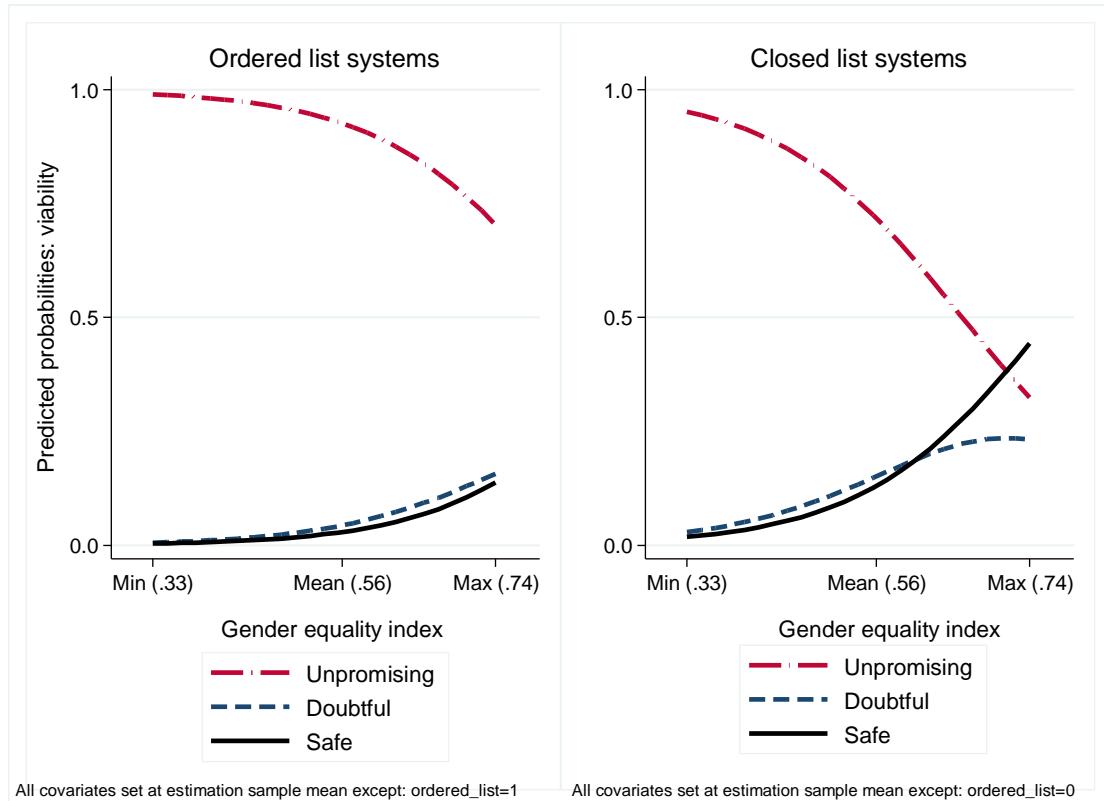
Note: Predicted probabilities derived from estimates in Table 5.6. Change in the predicted probabilities of holding each candidate type for an increase from the minimum to the maximum value of each independent variable, while holding all other independent variables constant at their means.

The results discussed above illustrate how certain characteristics of the electoral system and the overall context can have a positive or negative impact on women's likelihood of being positioned by party gatekeepers as viable candidates. However, the two central variables of interest, the voting system and the overall gender equality in the society do not always go hand-in-hand. There are countries in Europe that employ closed list ballot structure (favourable to women) but score low in regards to gender equality (unfavourable to women), such as Estonia, Greece, and the UK; or employ ordered list ballot structure (unfavourable to women) but score high in regards to gender equality (favourable to women), such as Belgium and Sweden. Similarly, candidate gender quotas and the level of candidate nomination could have varying effects on women's viable candidacy in different institutional settings. To estimate the full impact of the voting system, overall gender equality, quota rules, and candidate nomination procedures within parties, I report predicted probabilities of party-determined viable candidacy for women across a range of situations. These estimates, which are derived from the model presented in column three in Table 5.6 are reported on Figures 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4.

Figure 5.1 depicts the difference of the effect of overall gender equality across ordered list and closed list voting systems. While in both types of voting systems women candidates' likelihood of highly viable ("safe") candidacy is higher in more gender equal societies as opposed to less gender equal societies, the effect of gender equality is considerably stronger in closed list systems. In fact, in the most gender equal societies that apply closed list ballot structures, women are more likely to be appointed by party gatekeepers as "safe" than as "unpromising" or "doubtful" candidates. These results indicate that closed list voting rules may not increase women's chances for party-determined viable candidacy in countries where women are relatively unequal to

men. However, in a society with average levels of gender equality, women appear to be more likely to be viable candidates when a non-preferential voting system is employed.

**Figure 5.1: Predicted probabilities of party-determined candidate viability for women by voting system and gender equality**

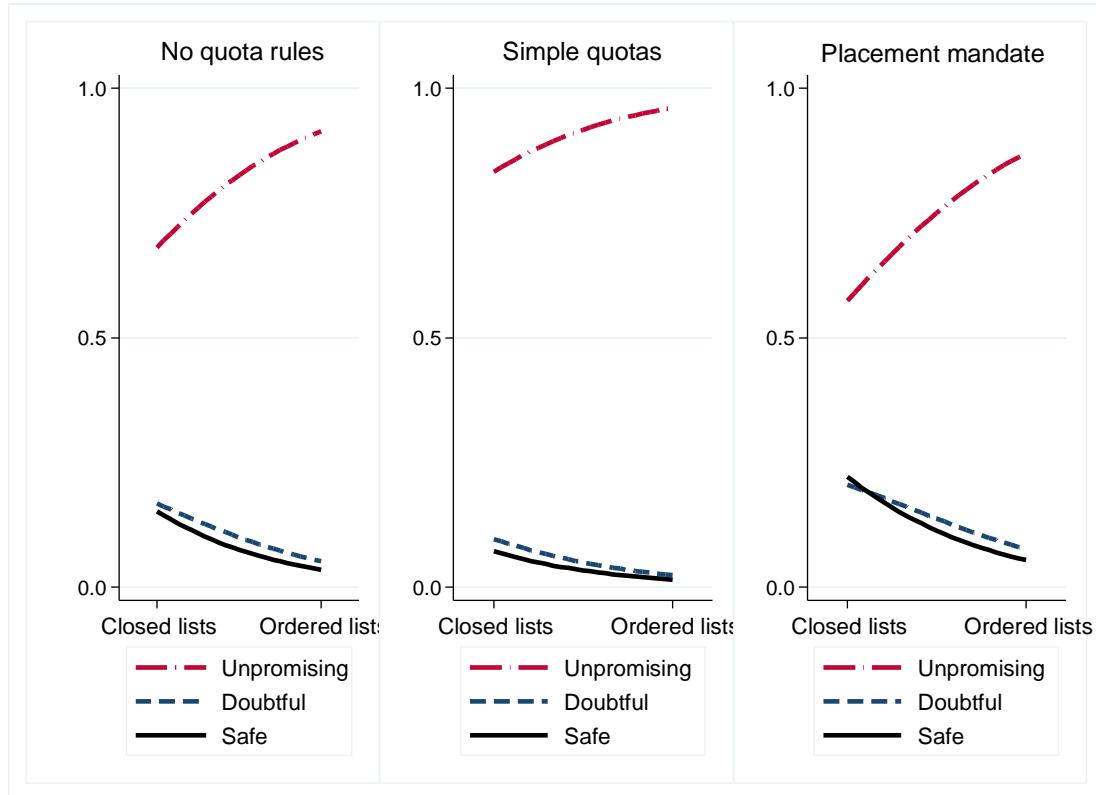


Note: Predicted probabilities obtained from estimates in column three in Table 5.6. All other covariates are set at estimation sample mean.

Figure 5.2 illustrates the effect of quota rules on women candidates' likelihood of party-determined viable candidacy across different voting systems. Whether there are no candidate gender quota rules in place or there are quotas with or without placement mandates, women always have a slightly higher likelihood for highly viable ("safe") and moderately viable ("doubtful") candidacy in systems that employ a closed list ballot structure. Also, both in ordered and closed list systems women have a minuscule advantage for "safe" candidacy if quotas with placement mandates are in place. Systems with quotas without placement mandates provide women with the lowest probability of

being a “safe” candidate. These differences, however, are very small and not statistically significant.

**Figure 5.2: Predicted probabilities of party-determined candidate viability for women by voting system and quota rules**

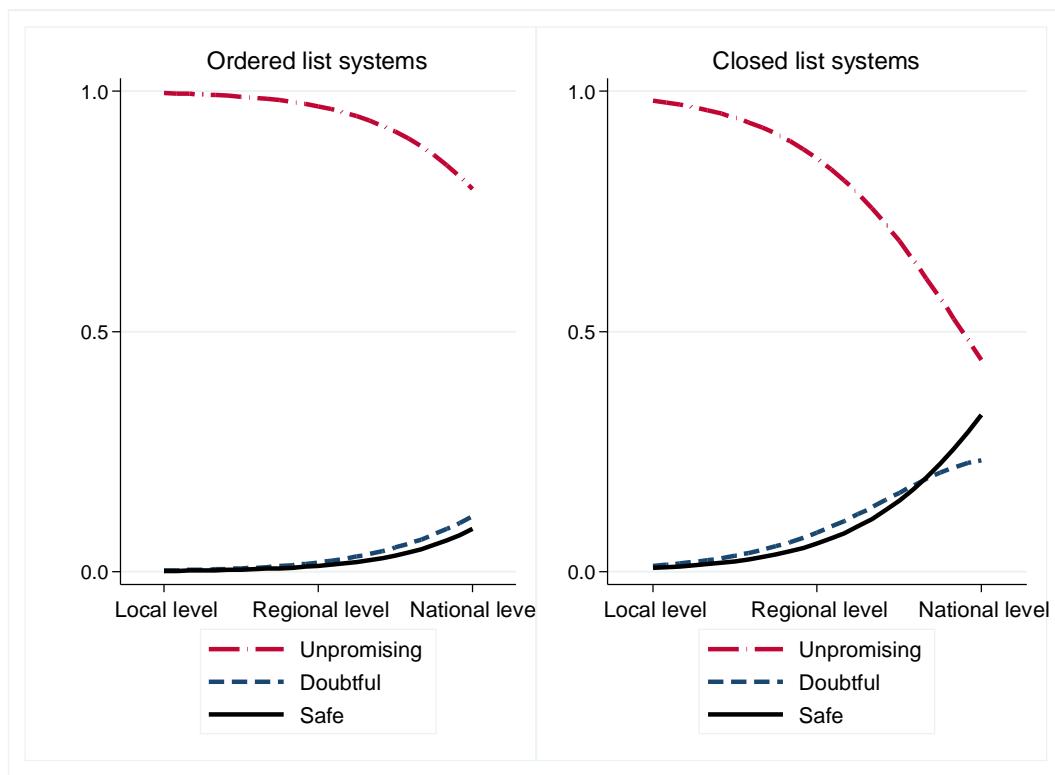


Note: Predicted probabilities obtained from estimates in column three in Table 5.6. All other covariates are set at estimation sample mean.

Since different electoral rules may affect candidate selection procedures (see Hazan and Voerman 2006), I also illustrate how women candidates’ probability of party-determined viable candidacy varies across closed and ordered list voting systems dependent on the centralisation of candidate selection procedures. Figure 5.3 depicts that women have close to zero probability of being positioned by party gatekeepers as a “doubtful” or “safe” candidate in both ordered and closed list systems if the candidate selection is carried out at the local level. However, there are differences in women’s probabilities for party-determined viable candidacy across voting systems once the

decision of candidate selection is made either at regional or national level. In fact, women's probability of being placed as a "safe" candidate is more than double in closed list voting systems compared to ordered list voting systems if the candidate selection decision is made at national level. Therefore, the combination of centralised candidate selection with closed list ballot structure appears the most likely context in which women can expect to be granted viable candidacy.

**Figure 5.3: Predicted probabilities of party-determined candidate viability by voting system and centralisation of candidate nomination**



Note: Predicted probabilities obtained from estimates in column three in Table 5.6. All other covariates are set at estimation sample mean.

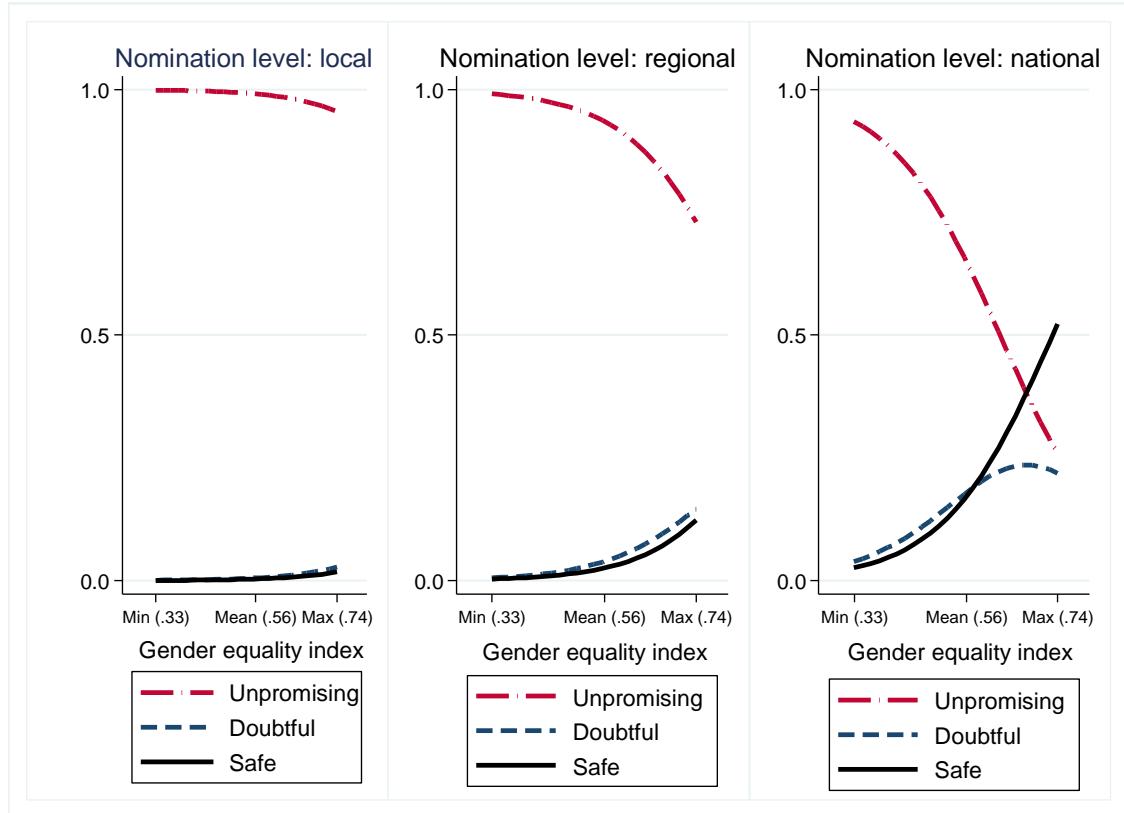
Figure 5.4 illustrates that different candidate selection procedures within political parties also condition the effect of overall gender equality on women candidates' party-determined viability. While overall gender equality does not influence women candidates' likelihood of being granted with a highly viable ("safe") candidacy in cases where candidates are nominated in local party offices, gender equality has a

strong effect on women's party-determined viability in cases where candidates are nominated at the national level. These findings are interesting because they indicate a mechanism of how overall levels of gender equality influence women's likelihood of being placed in winnable seats.

One of the arguments of how overall levels of gender equality affect women's electoral chances is that in more gender equal societies there is a greater supply of prospective female candidates. While this is likely to explain women's chances for candidacy, it does not appear to explain women's likelihood of being granted a viable candidacy. The results depicted on Figure 5.4 point to party gatekeepers. There are stark differences in the likelihood of women from moderately or highly gender equal societies to be placed at highly viable ("safe") seats dependent on the centralisation of candidate nomination. I consider it unlikely that in relatively gender equal societies the supply of suitable female candidates for viable list positions varies substantively dependent on whether the party selects its candidates at the local or at the national level. Rather it appears that party gatekeepers seem to respond more to the overall context of gender equality, thus to the perceived demand, if candidate selection is more centralised. Hence, one of the mechanisms through which overall levels of gender equality affect the election of women appears to be that party gatekeepers in more gender equal societies respond more to the perceived demand and thus place women higher in the list than their counterparts in less gender equal societies.

These results are also supporting Valdini's (2012) argument that the electorate has a strong incentive to be attentive to the prevalence of gender equality in the society and thus balance the ticket accordingly. The results of this Chapter do not only provide empirical evidence to Valdini's(2012) claim but also show that whether or not party gatekeepers are attentive to the overall gender ideology in the society depends on the level at which party gatekeepers select candidates.

**Figure 5.4: Predicted probabilities of party determined candidate viability for women by gender equality and centralisation of candidate nomination**



Note: Predicted probabilities obtained from estimates in column three in Table 5.6. All other covariates are set at estimation sample mean.

As mentioned in the Section 5.2.2 of this Chapter, ordered logit models need to meet the proportional odds assumption (also known as the parallel regression assumption). The critical assumption behind ordered logit model is that the slopes of coefficients are identical across each binary regression run within the ordered logit model (see Long and Freese 2006 for more details). In order to test whether the proportional odds assumption holds, I run the Brant test for each model presented in Table 5.6. As shown in Table 5.8, the parallel regression assumption can be rejected at the .01 level in the case of all three models. Since I concentrate on studying women's party-determined viable candidacy, I will pay special attention to columns four and five in Table 5.8. The Brant test of the female candidates' model shows that the largest

violations are for single constituency, party ideology and voting system, indicating that there may be problems related to these variables. While two of the problematic variables are control variables, the fact that there may be problems with the central variable of interest – voting system – leads me to estimate this model with a generalised ordered logit technique, which does not impose the constraint of parallel regression.

**Table 5.8: Brant test of parallel regression assumption results for Table 5.6**

	All respondents		Female candidates		Male candidates	
	Chi2	p > Chi2	Chi2	p > Chi2	Chi2	p > Chi2
Female	0.35	0.56				
Political experience	0.47	0.49	0.00	0.95	0.33	0.57
Political ambition: MEP	1.18	0.28	0.62	0.43	0.45	0.50
Political ambition: MP	0.57	0.45	0.12	0.73	0.67	0.41
Preference voting: ordered list	1.31	0.25	5.90	0.02	0.29	0.59
Gender equality	0.15	0.70	2.04	0.15	0.00	0.99
Simple quotas	6.87	0.01	2.55	0.11	1.62	0.20
Quotas with placement mandate	0.03	0.87	0.45	0.50	0.11	0.74
Left/liberal/green party	7.23	0.01	5.92	0.02	0.35	0.56
Single constituency	31.64	0.00	14.28	0.00	16.11	0.00
Centralised candidate selection	0.51	0.47	0.04	0.85	1.33	0.25
Inclusive selectorate	0.08	0.77	1.71	0.19	0.30	0.59
All	41.94	0.00	25.65	0.01	24.02	0.01

Table 5.9 presents the generalised ordered logit model results (the model is equivalent to the ordered logit model in column three, in Table 5.6). The second column in Table 5.9 contrasts “unpromising” candidacy (category 1) with “doubtful” and “safe” candidacy (categories 2 and 3); the third column contrasts “unpromising” and “doubtful” candidacy (categories 1 and 2) with “safe” candidacy (category 3). Hence, positive coefficients indicate that higher values on the explanatory variable make it more likely that the respondent will be in a higher category of viable candidacy ( $Y$ ) than the current one, whereas negative coefficients show that higher values on the explanatory variable increase the likelihood of being in the current or a lower category of viable candidacy

(Williams 2006). Independent variables for which parallel regression assumption holds have identical values in both columns and can be interpreted much the same as they were previously.

Most importantly, the results of the generalised ordered logit model (see Table 5.9) show that while the type of voting system does not affect women's likelihood of being positioned as more viable than a hopeless ("unpromising") candidate, women have a much lower likelihood of being positioned as a highly viable ("safe") candidate in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems. This is an important finding because the likely implications of not being positioned by party gatekeepers as a "safe" candidate compared to not being placed as a "doubtful" candidate are greater. "Safe" candidates are the most viable candidates and if women have varying chances for "safe" candidacy in different voting systems then they are also likely to have varying chances of securing an elected seat in these two different types of voting systems.

Similarly to the effect of non-preference voting, higher levels of gender equality also increase women's likelihood for highly viable ("safe") candidacy. Quotas with placement mandates, on the other hand, appear to increase women's chances to be reasonably viable candidates ("doubtful" or "safe" instead of "unpromising") but do not increase their chances for highly viable, i.e. "safe", candidacy. As argued above, it could be the result of the specific nature of placement mandates employed in the EU member states.

**Table 5.9: Explaining women's likelihood of being placed in winnable positions, generalised ordered logit estimates**

	“Unpromising” versus “doubtful” and “safe”	“Unpromising” and “doubtful” versus “safe”
Political experience	-0.37 (1.25)	-0.37 (1.25)
Political ambition: MEP	-0.17 (0.36)	-0.17 (0.36)
Political ambition: MP	-1.23 (0.41) **	-1.23 (0.41) **
Preference voting: ordered list	0.29 (0.47)	-6.13 (2.64) *
Gender equality	1.23 (2.47)	20.37 (7.05) **
Simple quotas	-1.22 (0.74) +	-1.22 (0.74) +
Quotas with placement mandate	2.03 (0.41) **	-1.43 (1.13)
Left/liberal/green party	-0.50 (0.39)	0.30 (0.42)
Single constituency	-1.75 (0.85) *	4.33 (2.10) *
Centralised candidate selection	1.75 (0.40) **	1.75 (0.40) **
Inclusive electorate	-0.14 (0.19)	-0.14 (0.19)
Constant	-4.49 (1.53) **	-18.60 (4.62) **

N = 327

Level 2 N = 19

Wald Chi2(df=16) = 822.54

Pseudo R2 = 0.39<sup>10</sup>

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data

\*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; + p<0.10 (two-tailed tests); robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

While the generalised ordered logit model provides more specific information than ordered logit models on how the explanatory variables affect women's chances for party-determined viable candidacy, the general inferences we make do not differ substantively between these two types of models. The direction of the effects in Table 5.6 and Table 5.9 are substantively the same. Hence, the results of this Chapter appear robust.

<sup>10</sup> The Pseudo R-squared statistic of this model (Pseudo R2 = 0.39) is higher than the one of female candidates' model in Table 5.6 (Pseudo R2 = 0.26). However, Pseudo R-squared statistic does not mean what R-squared means in the OLS regression, which makes it more difficult to interpret. It is also not surprising that the generalised ordered logit model has a higher Pseudo R-squared statistic than the ordered logit model because the generalised ordered logit model contains more information about how the explanatory variables explain changes in the categories of the dependent variable than the ordered logit model. These differences in the Pseudo R-squared values do not, however, mean that the two models are substantively different from each other because the inferences we make based on the coefficients of the independent variables are largely the same.

## **5.4 Final comments**

The data from the 2009 European Parliament elections show that while women have no lower likelihood of party-determined viable candidacy than men, the institutional setting and overall context in which they run affects female candidates' chances for viability more than male candidates' chances. In other words, context matters for female candidates. This is both bad news and good news. Certain contextual predictors, such as overall gender equality in the society, are not easily changed. However, institutional rules, such as the type of voting systems used and the level at which candidate selection takes place in political parties, are not only theoretically changeable but history shows that these features of electoral systems and party rules are indeed occasionally changed. Therefore, change in electoral rules towards closed list voting (as opposed to ordered list voting) and towards more centralised party selection procedures are likely to increase women's chances of party-determined viable candidacy, which is likely in turn to increase their chances of being elected.

The Chapter offers interesting findings with regards to candidate gender quotas. While I expected candidate gender quotas without a placement mandate rule to remain ineffective, quotas with placement mandate also appear not to deliver. Women do not have a higher likelihood of being granted a highly viable candidacy by party gatekeepers in countries that employ quotas with placement mandates. There are perhaps several reasons explaining this anomaly. First, some parties may altogether ignore the quota rule. But more importantly, it could be that quota legislation designed for national elections does not deliver the same results at other types of elections. These results may indicate that for different types of elections different quota measures should be used if we wish the quotas to deliver the same outcome.

In terms of individual level variables it is perhaps surprising that political experience does not explain women's likelihood of party-determined viable candidacy

but it does explain men's likelihood of party-determined viable candidacy. The data do not suggest that women candidates in general have more political experience than men, regardless of their viability score. These findings can be interpreted in two ways. First, a male candidate may need more extensive political experience than a female candidate to be positioned by party gatekeepers among viable candidates. In this case, women need to be less concerned about their political experiences than men when competing for viable candidacy. On the other hand, men can be more certain than women that party gatekeepers value their political experience and take it into consideration, when rank ordering the electoral lists. Therefore, even if a female candidate has extensive political experience she can be less certain than a male candidate with similar levels of experiences that she will be positioned in electoral lists as a viable candidate.

In conclusion, this Chapter provides important information with regards to party-determined viable candidacy. These findings are likely to help us explain certain mechanisms of the election of women in general, too. Therefore, the next steps of this thesis is to study if and how the differences in women candidates' party-determined viability across varying institutional and contextual contexts affect women's chances for individual news media coverage during the campaign, and how it may influence women's chances of being elected. The next chapters will investigate whether female candidates in ordered list systems are able to make up their relatively less viable candidacy with campaigning, extensive media coverage, and preference votes.

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## 6 WOMEN CANDIDATES' NEWS MEDIA VISIBILITY

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Previous literature offers some evidence that news media cover female candidates less frequently than male candidates but struggles to explain why this is the case (see for example, Banducci et al. 2007; Gidengil and Everitt 2000; Heldman et al. 2009). One of the reasons for this may be that the majority of past research has used gender as the only explanatory variable when comparing female candidates' news media coverage to men's. In order to advance the literature, the aim of this Chapter is to investigate possible mechanisms behind gender differences in the amounts of candidates' news media coverage in the context of the 2009 European Parliamentary elections and explain how news media coverage of candidates is influenced by the wider electoral context. By concentrating on the mechanisms explaining the possible gender bias in candidate coverage, I study women's news media coverage not as an independent process but as a stage in the broader electoral contest.

The previous Chapter showed that party gatekeepers treat female candidates differently in regards to where they rank women on the list (party-determined viability) dependent on the electoral system. Based on the findings of Chapter Five, the central

assumptions of this Chapter are that (i) the way party gatekeepers treat female candidates is likely to affect the way news media cover candidates, and (ii) since party-gatekeepers' behaviour in supporting viable female candidacy varies across different voting systems, it is likely that women's news media coverage also varies accordingly. Before the media decide who to cover, party gatekeepers have already made their decisions regarding viable candidacy, and as shown in Chapter Five, party-gatekeepers are not immune to the wider institutional setting when making their decisions. Since the choices of candidate viability are made by party gatekeepers before the media steps on the stage, it is likely that the media responds to these choices. In other words, the effects of candidate viability and voting system are likely to carry over to the media coverage of female candidates, too.

With this Chapter I do not only attempt to shed more light on the process of electing women but to contribute more specifically to the literature on candidates' news media coverage, too. Previous research on women candidates' news media coverage has offered either interesting case studies with individual level analysis (i.e. Gidengil and Everitt 2000; Heldman et al. 2009) or demonstrated cross-nationally varying differential media coverage with aggregate level data (i.e. Banducci et al. 2007). These studies offer useful insight into a possible gender bias in the amounts of news media coverage. However, past research has used gender as the only explanatory variable and has not linked women's media coverage to the wider electoral context. Hence, we are left with little knowledge of which mechanisms and how drive the individual level gender gap in the amounts of news media coverage.

This Chapter is based on the assumption that news media coverage of electoral campaigns is not an independent process, but influenced by the behaviour of different actors, i.e. parties, candidates, voters, and by the electoral rules and overall context. Hence, it is necessary to examine how specific electoral systems, parties' decisions of

candidate viability, and overall electoral context, next to candidate sex, affect candidates' news media coverage during the campaign.

Besides the limited insights into the mechanisms of women's candidate coverage, there is also a lack of consensus among scholars about the very existence of gender bias in news media coverage. A number of previous studies indicate, for example, that male and female candidates receive differential news media coverage (Heldman et al. 2005; Kahn 2003; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). At the same time, some more recent studies have failed to find that female candidates receive less news media attention than male candidates (see for example, Heldman et al. 2009; Smith 1997; Uscinski and Goren 2011). I assume that the inconsistency in the findings is at least partly due to the fact that different scholars use varying types of either cross-national aggregate level data or individual level data from a single election in a single country / constituency. Very often, thus, scholars are either unable to control for the individual level or the institutional and contextual level variables affecting women's news media coverage.

Let us imagine an aggregate level study, which does not control for party-determined candidate viability but which uses data from a campaign in which candidates of one sex are considerably more viable than candidates of the opposite sex. In such a context, we are likely to witness a gender bias in the news media coverage because the media are more likely to cover candidates with realistic chances of winning a seat than candidates without this chance. Moreover, it may also be necessary to question the assumption that media coverage is biased unless women and men receive equal amounts (and similar type) of coverage. One could argue instead that the real gender bias in candidate coverage would only appear if comparable male and female candidates failed to attract comparable amounts of news media attention. Therefore, by including individual party-determined viability in the analysis, I can, among other

things, study the media coverage of comparable female and male candidates (i.e. candidates with similar levels of viability).

Not controlling for institutional and contextual variables may be misleading as well. Results from Chapter Five propose that women's chances for viable candidacy vary across different institutional and contextual settings. Hence, it is likely that a study which investigates gender bias in news media coverage in a country where women are placed on viable list positions or constituencies finds less evidence of this bias than a study which examines the same question in a context where party gatekeepers are less likely to support viable female candidacy.

This Chapter, therefore, does not only investigate how the relationships identified in Chapter Five concerning women's viable candidacy carry over (or not) to women's news media visibility. It also aims to fill in the gap in the more specific literature studying women's news media visibility highlighted above.

## **6.1 Candidate gender and news media coverage**

Many scholars, as well as politicians and the general public, view the mass media as a strong force in politics which not only influence the way citizens construct and see the political landscape, but also affect political careers and candidates' chances of getting elected (Graber 1993; Kahn 1994b). The idea that the media are a strong force influencing political realities has brought forward a growing concern about the differential treatment the media provide to different types of candidates. A number of previous studies indicate, for example, that male and female candidates receive differential news media coverage (Heldman et al. 2005; Kahn 2003; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). Besides the amount of coverage women and men candidates receive and the type of stories in which women and men candidates appear, the tone of coverage

they receive, differs, too (Bystrom et al. 2001; Gidengil and Everitt 2000; Heldman et al. 2009; Heldman et al. 2005; Kahn 1994a; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Uscinski and Goren 2011). However, a number of more recent studies have failed to find that female candidates receive smaller amounts of news media attention than male candidates, especially if the case studies concentrate on highly viable candidates only (see for example, Heldman et al. 2009; Smith 1997; Uscinski and Goren 2011).

### *6.1.1 Why does news media coverage matter?*

Candidates with higher levels of media coverage are more easily recognised by voters on the ballot box and are therefore likely to have a higher chance of getting elected. If the amount of media attention and type of coverage received by candidates depended on their personal traits and qualities alone, the overall impact on electoral process would be less concerning. Previous studies, however, indicate that media coverage does not only depend on individual traits or experiences, which candidates can determine by themselves, but rather there is a group bias manifested in female candidates systematically receiving relatively less coverage or less favorable coverage than their male contenders (see, for example, Banducci et al. 2007; Gidengil and Everitt 2000; Heldman et al. 2005; Kahn 1994a; Kahn 1994b; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Lawless 2009; Uscinski and Goren 2011). These studies indicate that media play a role in the electoral competition and are likely to reduce female candidates' chances of getting elected.

Banducci and her colleagues (2007) report in their study that the electoral process is more likely influenced by visibility rather than the presence of female candidates in the race. Without being visible, female candidates have little impact on the overall mass political engagement, including voter turnout among female electorate (Banducci et al. 2007). Also, since variations in the amount of media coverage can

influence recognition rates (Goldenberg and Traugott 1987), gender differences in the news media attention are likely to lead to significant consequences within the electoral process. This implies that news media treatment does not only influence candidates during ongoing campaigns, but these coverage patterns are likely to affect the future of women in politics, too: “gendered images of political figures may influence the decisions of political or party elites when they nominate or solicit candidates” (Kittilson and Fridkin 2008). In other words, candidate viability is not only likely to affect candidate news media visibility but the relationship may work the other way around, too. If media systematically cover female candidates less frequently than male candidates, irrespective of their viability, party gatekeepers could interpret it as a message that there is no demand for female candidates.

However, the patterns of candidate coverage in the news media are not only likely to affect electoral results but also describe the more general gender ideology in the newsroom of a given society. Scammell and Semetko (2000) suggest that one of the vital functions of the media in democratic systems is to accurately represent social groups. They, thus, argue that group bias in media coverage signifies not only a traditional value system but also an ill-served democratic process (Scammell and Semetko 2000). Hence, due to the power media possess in promoting some candidates over others, the media also holds significant responsibilities of fairness and equality.

#### *6.1.2 Gender bias in the news media coverage: evidence from the literature*

Gendered news media coverage has received considerable scholarly attention; however, most of the studies thus far have concentrated on the United States. In the early 1990s, scholars reported that during the American Senate races male candidates did not only receive more coverage but were also portrayed in a more flattering light than their female contenders (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). Moreover, these initial

studies also show that media coverage varies by the type of elections, too, with U.S. Senate races receiving more gender biased media coverage than gubernatorial races (Kahn 1994a; Kahn 1994b).

Gender differences in candidate coverage have also been reported more recently. Heldman et al. (2005) found, for example, that during the 1999 Republican presidential primaries the only female candidate, Elizabeth Dole, received less media coverage compared to male Republican presidential candidates. This generic trend of gender-biased media coverage of female candidates has also been supported by data outside the United States. Gidengil and Everitt (2000) report that female political leaders experienced more filtered and toned down media coverage than their male counterparts during the 1993 Canadian Leaders Debates.

One of the few cross-national studies measuring media coverage of female candidates found that at the country level women received less media coverage than their total share among all candidates would have expected them to gain if there was a complete equality (Banducci et al. 2007). Moreover, Banducci et al.'s (2007) study also found that there were considerable cross-national differences in female candidate coverage. This led Banducci et al. (2007) to suggest that the fact that in countries where women have a higher-than-average representation within the European Parliament (EP) but receive less media attention might be because women are not such a novelty in politics anymore and therefore receive less news coverage. Apart from that, there is little discussion in the literature about possible explanations of (cross-nationally) varying levels of female candidates' media coverage.

The fact that there has been so little attention paid to the predictors of the amount of candidate news media coverage may also be because the complete record shows some mixed results, with some scholars failing to find any gender bias against women in respect to the amount of candidate coverage (see, for example, Bystrom et al.

2001; Heldman et al. 2009; Kittilson and Fridkin 2008; Smith 1997). Heldman et al. (2009), for example, report that Sarah Palin received more coverage than any other vice-presidential candidate in the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign. Also Smith (1997) failed to find gender differences in the amounts of candidate coverage. However, Kahn (2003) notes that Smith's (1997) study might have been limited, due to the fact that competitive women candidates were overrepresented in his sample. That might have been the reason why Smith (1997) found no gender gap in candidate coverage (Kahn 2003). While these scholars have failed to find a gender gap in the amounts of candidate coverage, all of these studies show how stories featuring women are different from stories featuring male candidates (Bystrom et al. 2001; Heldman et al. 2009), indicating that media "still perpetuate gender stereotypes that link female candidates more often with stereotypically "female issues"" (Kittilson and Fridkin 2008).

While the most recent literature has moved on to study gendered mediation and the differences in the type and tone of media coverage of highly visible and prominent candidates, such as Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin in the 2008 U.S. presidential race (see for example, Heldman et al. 2009; Lawless 2009; Uscinski and Goren 2011), we are left with little knowledge of what influences the amount of news media coverage male and female candidates receive on a larger scale. I argue that knowing which types of candidates receive the most coverage and which types of candidates get the least or no news media coverage matters, too. Besides extensive negative coverage, also limited amount of coverage (or no coverage at all) is likely to hinder a candidate's electoral chances. If we concentrate in our studies on gendered mediation and the type and tone of coverage only, we systematically exclude from the analysis candidates who receive no media coverage. I assume that by systematically omitting these observations we also omit possibly valuable information on how the media affect wider electoral context. Since this thesis aims to explain the processes and mechanisms of electing women (and

not electing them) it is necessary to include in the analysis both potential electoral winners and losers.

## 6.2 Expectations and hypotheses

In this section, I present some generic expectations and hypotheses that structure the analysis in this Chapter (see Table 6.1 for summary). As explained above, past research offers a mixed record of evidence of the *gender bias* in terms of the amount of news media coverage candidates receive. While some scholars report gender bias in the amount of candidate coverage (see for example, Heldman et al. 2005; Kahn 2003; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991), others do not (see for example Heldman et al. 2009; Kittilson and Fridkin 2008; Smith 1997; Uscinski and Goren 2011). Hence, it is difficult to predict the effect gender has on individual candidate news media coverage.

One of the central ideas of the thesis is that parties possess a considerable power in determining an individual candidate's likelihood of electoral success by having the ability to rank-order candidates and thereby affect their *viability* (in ordered and closed list systems). I assume that this party-determined viability does not only influence individual candidates' chances of getting elected but of attracting news media attention, too. I introduced this expectation first in Chapter Two. As shown on Figure 2.3 (see p. 76), I hypothesise that a candidate's party-determined viability has a direct effect on the amount of news media coverage she is likely to receive. Candidates who have a fair chance of winning the office are also more likely to attract media attention. Contrarily, candidates who are positioned at the bottom of the party's election list have little chance of winning the office and, thus, gaining news media coverage, regardless of their personal political experience or ambition. I, therefore, assume that the media do not

select independently the candidates it cover during the campaign but rely, in a way, upon a pre-selection of prominent candidates provided by parties.

Besides candidates who are highly ranked in electoral lists, I suspect the media to pay more attention to incumbent office holders because they have proven with past record that they can win a given seat. I expect *inc incumbency* to have the strongest effect on candidates' news media coverage in open list systems. In open list systems no list ranking takes place and consequently incumbency becomes one of the few features that distinguish candidates from each other.

Kahn and Goldenberg (1991) report that the differences in media coverage are, indeed, apparent not only between men and women but also between incumbents and challengers, indicating that current office holders have better chances of gaining access to news media compared to their challengers. Giebler and Wagner (2010), however, point out that the incumbents and candidates might not always have the same impact on voters. They suggest that national candidates affect voters' party choice more than European candidates during European Parliament elections (Giebler and Wagner 2010). Therefore, the incumbency in the European Parliament might not serve as such a strong predictor of media coverage. Moreover, in the case of European Parliament elections, the incumbents are geographically "further away" from their voters and from the national media covering these elections. Therefore, I expect the effect of incumbency in general to be weak in the case of European Parliament elections. But as mentioned above, incumbency is likely to help candidates in open list systems to receive more media coverage. It is one of the few characteristics that allow electoral contenders to distinguish from other (same party) candidates as there is no party-determined list-ordering of candidates.

But how would candidate viability affect women's chances for news media coverage? Previous studies (Atkeson 2003; Kittlison 2006; Wolbrecht and Campbell

2007) indicate that *viability and novelty* of female candidates are more salient and influential aspects of female candidacies than their mere participation in the electoral contest. Both of these studies concentrate on the impact viable candidates have on women's political engagement suggesting that viable candidates are more successful than non-viable women candidates in mobilising female voters (Atkeson 2003; Wolbrecht and Campbell 2007). Similar argument could be made in regards to candidate coverage. It is likely that media would not pay attention to any type of female candidate but would concentrate the coverage on the more viable and novel women in the electoral contest. Therefore, if for example women were placed on the electoral lists less favorably than men, women's unfavorable election list rankings would make them less viable and more obscure to media attention. However, Chapter Five provided no evidence that women on average lack party-determined viability. I, thus, expect candidate gender to have no direct effect on the amount of news media coverage individual candidates receive.

I also control for *candidate's party viability*. In the European context, where political parties are the central players on the political arena, candidate's personal viability is highly dependent on her party's electoral standing. Since previous literature suggests that accessibility to news media coverage depends on both the candidate's and her party's electoral viability (Anscombe et al. 1991; Iyengar 1990; Trimble and Sampert 2004), it is reasonable to expect that a great extent of the variance in candidate coverage is explained by whether a candidate is a member of one of the front-running parties.

Since this thesis studies candidate coverage in all EU member states, it is also possible to test for contextual factors that are likely to affect the amount of coverage female candidates receive in the news media. Based on the central idea of the thesis, I expect the *type of voting system* used in proportional electoral system to affect women

candidates' news media visibility. As explained in Chapters Two and Three, in proportional electoral systems voters are most commonly either asked to demonstrate their support to a specific candidate of a political party (preferential voting) or to a political party as a whole (closed and blocked party list voting) when casting their ballots. Preferential voting systems vary from open list systems (voters single-handedly determine the electoral success of individual candidates) to ordered list systems (voters are presented with ranked election lists but based on the amount of preference votes these party-determined lists will be amended to a larger or smaller extent when translating votes to seats). Whether or not the party competes as a whole or by individual candidates may influence how media cover the campaign. It is likely that in systems where voters can demonstrate their preference to a specific candidate the media coverage of the campaign and election is also more candidate than party centred.

Whether the campaign coverage is more candidate or party centred may affect the amount of news media coverage women candidates receive in multiple ways. Past research suggests that in preference voting systems personal characteristics that mark a candidate as being distinct from others in her party can be seen as a potential advantage in gaining preference votes (Carey and Shugart 1995; Katz 1980; Shugart et al. 2005). If the competition for news media coverage takes place not only between candidates from different parties but also between same party candidates, one could argue that women could use their sex as the distinguishing personal characteristic not only as a potential advantage in gaining preference votes but as a potential advantage in gaining news media coverage, too. At the same time, in non-preferential voting systems media are likely to use more party-centred campaign coverage. In such a case, it is reasonable to assume that if media pay any attention to individual candidates, it covers the most prominent and "safe" candidates, and thus cares less about other distinctive candidate characteristics, such as candidate sex. Based on this argument one would expect women

to receive more news media coverage in preferential voting systems than in non-preferential voting systems because in the former systems there are likely to be more opportunities to use being a woman as a distinguishing feature when gaining media coverage.

But we know that in some preferential voting systems party list ranking matters, too. Therefore, it could be that in different types of preferential voting systems (open versus ordered list voting systems) candidate gender has a differential effect on candidate's news media coverage. In open list systems, candidate sex and incumbency are likely to be the most distinctive features that allow candidates to tell apart from one another. Therefore, in open list systems women may receive more news media coverage because in most countries female candidacy is still rarer than male candidacy. However, in ordered list systems media can use, besides candidate sex and incumbency, also other indicators, such as candidates' party-determined viability, when selecting who to cover and who not to cover.

As argued above, I expect the amount of news media coverage a candidate receives to be strongly affected by her party-determined viability. We know from Chapter Five that women are less likely to be placed on highly viable list positions in ordered list voting systems compared to closed list systems. If party-determined viability is the central predictor of candidate's news media coverage and women are less viable in ordered list systems than in closed list systems, it is likely that women also receive less news media coverage in ordered list systems than in closed list systems. Hence, we would witness an interaction effect of party-determined viability and voting system on women's individual news media visibility.

However, one could also argue that less viable starting positions may motivate female candidates to campaign harder and thereby still attract the same amounts of news media coverage as their more highly ranked colleagues in closed list systems do. Hence,

the question remains whether women are able to make up the less competitive starting position in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems and still receive the same amount of media coverage. Since I expect media to primarily rely on the selection made by parties when choosing who, when and how to cover, I hypothesise that women receive less news media coverage in ordered list systems than in closed list systems.

It is also possible to test for other country- and party-level variables. In this Chapter I expect that political parties influence their candidates' chances of receiving media coverage not only by how they place their male and female candidates in the election lists but also by *formal party rules*. Candidate gender quotas are the most direct way to influence the gender composition within political parties' election lists. Both states and political parties have the ability to increase women's descriptive representation by creating formal rules – *gender quotas* – which prescribe a certain share of women among candidates.

While the aim of candidate gender quotas is to increase women's descriptive representation (Caul 2001), in reality quotas often affect the share of women among candidates only. Aggregate level data used in Chapter Four provide empirical evidence to this claim (see Table 4.4, p. 127). While quota legislation has a positive impact on women's candidacy, it fails to predict women's descriptive representation. Moreover, results in Table 4.4 (see p. 127) also suggest that in countries in which quota legislation is in place, women candidates receive relatively less news media coverage than in countries without such legislation. I assume that these results are partly due to the fact that in most cases legislative quotas do not prescribe the position which women are to take in party lists, meaning that increasing the share of women among candidates does not necessarily increase their share among viable candidates (Krook 2007; Matland 2006), and thus their likelihood of receiving more media coverage.

However, results in Chapter Five suggest also that quotas with placement mandate rule do not increase the share of women among viable candidates (see Table 5.6, p. 168). But if media follow the parties' selection of prominent and interesting candidates then there is no reason to expect that quota rules would increase women's news media coverage. It is unreasonable to expect that the media independently respond to quota legislation. The only reason why we should expect women to receive more news media coverage if they run for parties which apply quota rule or in countries where the state defines candidate quotas is because the quota rules should increase the supply of women to cover. If the placement mandate rule is in effect, we could also expect the quotas to increase the supply of viable and thus "interesting" women candidates who media could cover. However, since Chapter Five provided no evidence that quotas with or without placement mandate rule increase women candidates' party-determined viability in the European Parliament elections, it is also unreasonable to expect that media cover women more in countries with quota legislation. Hence, I expect quota legislation to have no effect on women candidates' news media visibility.

At the same time, the impact of the voting system and the party's candidate selection decisions (whether women are on the top of the list) might also have spurious effects. The fact that in some countries the press cover men and women candidates more equally and that political parties position both men and women as their top candidates can also be an expression of *overall gender equality* in the society. Countries where women participate more in labor force, get paid more equally to men, and have more political and social power than in other countries, both media and political parties are likely to treat female candidates more equally, too. Such expectations are also supported by previous research which argues that women experience greater political representation in countries where gender ideology is more equal (Matland 1998; Norris and Franklin 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005).

Both Chapters Four and Five provide empirical evidence that overall gender equality in society is likely to affect positively the amount of news media coverage women receive. Overall gender equality has a strong positive effect on women's aggregate news media visibility (see Table 4.4, p. 127). Moreover, it also increases women's individual chances for party-determined viable candidacy (see Table 5.6, p. 168). Therefore, it is likely that in more gender equal societies there is a greater supply of (viable) female candidates that the media could cover. Also, in a more gender equal society the newsroom is likely to be more gender equal, and therefore more prone to cover female candidates than their colleagues in countries where the newsroom consists predominantly of men. In addition, in a more gender equal society there is also not only a greater supply of women candidates to cover but there is also likely to be more demand from the wider public for more gender equal campaign coverage. All things considered, I expect overall gender equality to be a strong positive predictor of the amount of news media coverage women candidates attract.

Table 6.1 summarises the expectations concerning the amount of news media coverage female candidates receive based on the discussion above.

**Table 6.1: Central expectations of women's news media visibility**

Predictors	DV: (Female) candidate's individual news media coverage
Female candidate	No effect
Candidate viability	Positive effect
Preference voting: open lists	No effect
Preference voting: ordered lists	Negative effect
Overall gender equality	Positive effect
Quotas without placement mandate	No effect
Quotas with placement mandate	No effect
Inc incumbency	Positive effect

### **6.3 Data and measurement**

For the analysis, I combine data from multiple sources. The data on the amount of media coverage candidates receive originates from the Media Content Data of the 2009 European Election Study (EES), which cover media in 27 EU member states. The benefit these data provide is that they have been collected EU-wide, using the same coding rules in each country to assure comparability across countries (for more information see Schuck et al. 2010). Chapter Three (see Section 3.4.3, pp. 88-90) provides further information on the data collection and reliability of the 2009 EES Media Content Data.

Before proceeding with individual level analysis, I first explore at the aggregate level whether there is any gender bias in the 2009 European Parliament campaign coverage. The key measure used in the initial analysis is the visibility of female candidates. I use an indicator of female candidate visibility that is comparable to the previous work on the 2004 EP election by Banducci and her colleagues (Banducci et al. 2007). To measure female candidate visibility, I calculated the share of stories in which women candidates appeared among all the stories of MEP candidates in each country. In order to establish whether there are gender differences in media coverage, I explore it against the share of women among candidates. Since the thesis attempts to study if there is a prior selection of viable candidates taking place in party offices, visibility of female candidates is also explored against the share of women among highly viable candidates (party list leaders).

#### *Candidate level model*

For the candidate-level analysis, the Media Content Data set is transposed by transforming candidates (actors) from variables to cases. This way, it is possible to calculate how many times each candidate is mentioned (the amount of coverage she

gained), and estimate candidate-level models. Since the number of news stories covering MEP candidates varies from one country to another, I generate a standardised measure of candidate coverage by calculating the proportion of times a candidate is mentioned against the total number of times MEP candidates are mentioned in the news media in a given country (share of media coverage), and use this as the main dependent variable. As a result, the values of the standardised candidate coverage vary from “0” to “100”, indicating the percentage of total MEP coverage on a specific candidate in a given country. (See section Chapter 6 in Appendix 1 for more detailed information.)

For candidate-level analysis, I created a dataset listing all MEP candidates (excluding only completely irrelevant parties and candidates), including individual and country / party level measures for independent variables. To these data, candidates’ individual media coverage from the EES Media Content Data is linked. However, as mentioned in Chapter Three, not all candidates who received media coverage have their personal actor code in the Media Study which means that only media coverage of candidates who have their personal actor code can be linked to the individual level dataset. Therefore, candidates whose media coverage is not coded personally but as “other X party MEP candidate” results in missing values in the candidate level dataset. Since gender is coded for all candidates that receive media coverage (also for the ones without a personal actor code), there is no selection bias caused by coding procedures in the aggregate level analysis.

However, it is important to establish the variables that explain the above mentioned sample selection bias in the 2009 EES Media Content Data set before proceeding with individual level analysis. When investigating the Media Content Study Codebook it appears that prominent candidates (list leaders and incumbents), and candidates from more viable parties are overrepresented among “candidates with actor code”. In order to establish if these variables predict the likelihood of having an actor

code, I run binary logistic regression models and a model with all likely predictors of being assigned an actor code.

Results in Table 6.2 indicate that candidates with higher list ranking are more likely to have an individual actor code. However, the data also show that a model in which having an actor code is predicted with a dummy variable of viability (whether a candidate is a list leader or not) has more explanatory power. Therefore, it appears that the latter variable (list leader) explains the selection bias better than standardised list position. Table 6.2 also indicates that incumbent office holders and candidates running on a viable party's list are more likely to have their individual actor code.

While binary regression results suggest that women are less likely than men to have been assigned a personal actor code, when controlling for other possible selection variables the effect of gender becomes insignificant. This indicates that the Media Content Study team did not systematically avoid assigning actor codes to female candidates. Rather it suggests that (i) women candidates may be placed less frequently in the most viable list positions (list leaders); (ii) women are less likely to be incumbents than men, and / or (iii) women run for less viable parties.

**Table 6.2: Explaining the selection bias in the 2009 EES Media Content Data, logit estimates**

Individual actor code									
Female candidate	-0.63 (0.11) **								
Viability: std. list position	-2.43 (0.72) **								
Viability: list leader	4.87 (0.43) **								
Party viability (>10% votes)	0.21 (0.09) *								
Incumbency	2.15 (0.27) **								
Constant	-2.41 (0.12) **	-4.32 (0.74) **	-4.58 (0.33) **	-2.68 (0.15) **	-2.91 (0.14) **	-5.17 (0.46) **			
N	7635	5413	5413	7662	7661	5388			
Level 2 N	25	20	20	25	25	20			
Pseudo R2	0.01	0.22	0.51	0.00	0.08	0.54			
Wald Chi2 (df=1)	30.68	11.41	125.77	5.21	63.93	207.69(df=4)			

\*\*p < 0.01; \*p<0.05; robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

Source: 2009 EP candidate lists; 2009 EES Media Content Data

Since the 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data used in Chapter Five does not suggest that women are granted by parties with less viable candidacy than men, it is necessary to control for this assumption using the full Candidate Lists data. Table 6.3 shows that candidate gender does not predict candidate's standardised list position. However, women are less likely to be assigned the most viable list position – list leader – than men. Therefore, women are likely to be underrepresented among candidates with actor code due to the fact that they are underrepresented among list leaders.

**Table 6.3: Candidate gender and viable candidacy, OLS and logit estimates**

	Std. list position (OLS)	List leader (Logit regression)
Female candidate	-0.00 (0.04)	-0.75 (0.11) **
Constant	0.00 (0.02)	-2.07 (0.19) **
N	5388	5388
Level 2 N	20	20
R2 / Pseudo R2	0.00	0.02

\*\*p < 0.01; robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

Source: 2009 EP candidate lists

Whether or not a candidate received media coverage and whether such coverage was individually measured in the 2009 EES Media Content Study depends on a non-random event of being assigned a personal actor code in the Media Study. However, it is important to keep in mind that the bias in the Media Content data set is not only due to coding procedures. In fact, prior to the non-random selection of the Media Study for assigning individual actor codes to prominent candidates only, there was another event of non-random selection – the choice of political parties to position smaller share of women to the very top of their list compared to men. Tables 6.2 and 6.3 support this assumption as men are overrepresented in the final sample of candidates. It is primarily caused by the fact that there is an over representation of election list leaders in this

sample and among election list leaders there are more men than among all candidates. However, when controlling for whether a candidate is a list leader, incumbent, and / or running in a list of a viable party, candidate gender is no longer a significant selection variable (see the most right-hand column in Table 6.2). As a result, the sample selection is explained by candidate's viability (list leader), incumbency, and her party's viability.

The fact that there is a sample selection bias in the 2009 EES Media Content data makes it inappropriate to use OLS regression model. Since candidates with actor codes differ from candidates without actor codes in important ways, the estimates I would obtain from cases with actor codes only would likely be biased. In order to control for the selection bias, I employ the Heckman selection procedure (Heckman 1979).

### *Modelling selection*

I use maximum likelihood estimation of Heckman's sample selection model (Heckman 1979) to control for the biases discussed above. Heckman's sample selection model is designed for treating censored sample, in which one does not have information on dependent variable if certain assumptions are not met (i.e., because of sampling bias), but one does know the values of independent variables. Heckman (1979) developed a procedure to estimate the probability of having a censored value on dependent variable by using probit analysis for the full sample. It is important to note that the probit function is estimated on the entire sample of  $I$  observations (all MEP candidates) whereas the regression analysis is performed solely on the subsample of  $I$  observations. The subsample includes only these observations for which the dependent variable is observed (MEP candidates whose media coverage was measured in the Media Study). Therefore, the relationship of interest is a simple linear model:

$$Y_i = x'_i \beta + u \quad \leftarrow \text{outcome equation}$$

But because of the censored sample Y is only observed if a second, unobserved latent variable exceeds a certain threshold:

$$z^*_i = w_i' \alpha + e_i; \text{ where } z_i = 1 \text{ if } z^*_i > 0, \text{ and } z_i = 0, \text{ if otherwise.}$$

And therefore probit selection function is used:

$$\Pr(z_i = 1) = \Phi(\alpha' w_i) \quad \leftarrow \text{selection equation.}$$

In other words, the modeling explained above uses the information on candidates without actor codes, too, when predicting the amount of news media coverage individual candidates receive.

Since the data are hierarchical, utilising individual, party, and country level variables, I report robust standard errors adjusted for the clusters of countries.

### *Operationalisation*

There are two types of independent variables: selection variables and regular independent variables. As discussed above, selection variables include candidate viability (list leader or not), incumbency, and the electoral viability of the national party, for which the candidate is running. For candidate viability (1 = list leader, 0 = not list leader) and incumbency (1 = incumbent, 0 = non-incumbent) I employ dichotomous variables. The electoral standing of the national party is operationalised by the share of

votes the party received in the past national elections prior to the 2009 EP election and a dichotomous variable is used in the analysis (1 = party received more than 10% of the vote, 0 = party received less than 10% of the vote).

For the regression analysis, I use a dichotomous variable for gender (1 = female candidate, 0 = male candidate). In the outcome equation I also include a measure of candidate viability (standardised list position).

As explained above, I distinguish three types of voting systems – open list preferential, ordered list preferential, and closed list non-preferential voting system. I use dichotomous variables for measuring the voting systems, closed list system being the baseline category. I operationalise candidate gender quotas similarly to Chapter Five by adding to the model dichotomous variables of gender quotas without placement mandates and gender quotas with placement mandates, no gender quotas being the baseline category.

For measuring overall gender equality in society, I use the original gender equality index explained in Chapter Three (see pp. 99-101). The models also include a control variable for the size of constituency. Similarly to Chapter Five, I employ a proxy variable indicating whether the country in which a candidate runs constitutes a single constituency or not (1 = single constituency, 0 = multiple constituencies).

A detailed summary of each variable used in the analysis as well as descriptive statistics for these variables are presented in Appendices One and Two.

## 6.4 Results

In order to determine whether there is a gender gap in candidate coverage, the Chapter first examines news media coverage at the aggregate level. All candidates,

including those without personal EES Media Study actor code are included in this analysis, as gender was coded on all occasions.

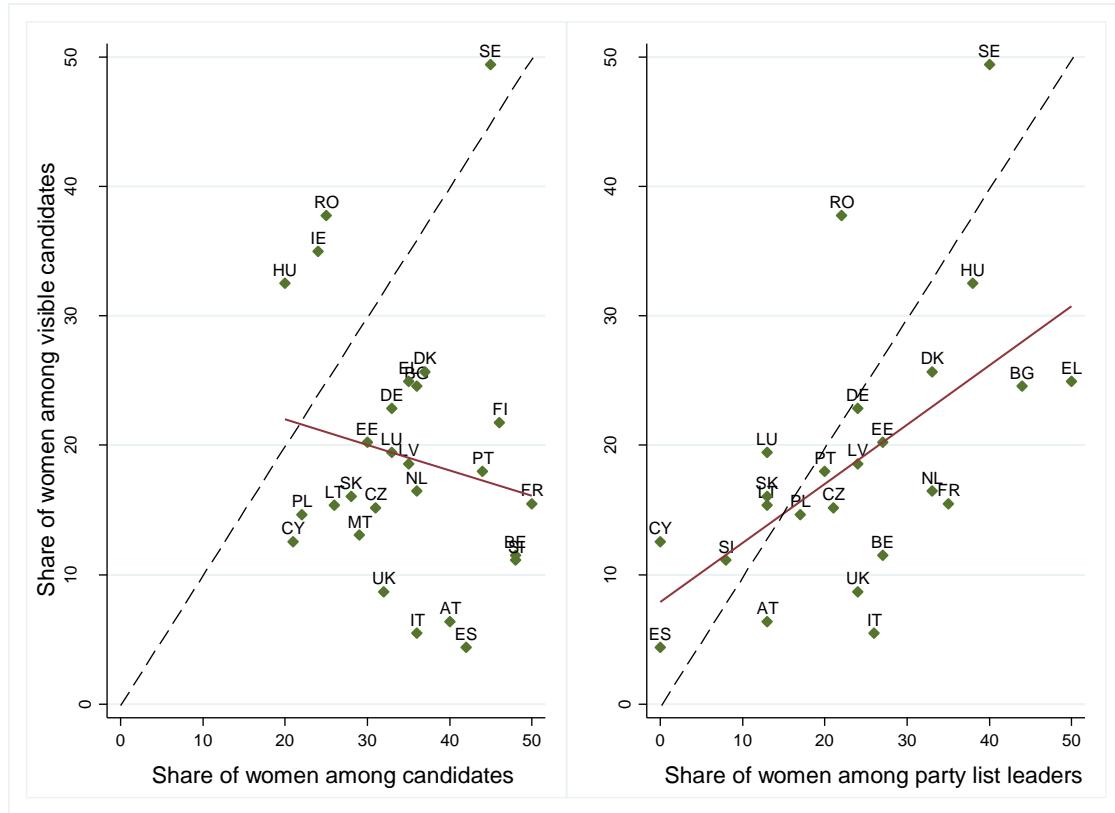
Left-hand graph on Figure 6.1 demonstrates the relationship between the share of female candidates in each member state and the visibility of female candidates in the news during the 2009 European Parliament election campaign. The dashed diagonal line represents a situation where the proportion of media coverage women candidates receive is equal to their share among all candidates. In majority of countries female candidates gain proportionally much less media attention than their share among candidates would expect them to experience if there was no bias in news coverage. Moreover, the fitted line depicts a slight negative relationship between the proportion of women candidates and the coverage they receive in the news.

The most extreme examples of gender bias in news attention are Spain and Austria where women constitute around 40 percent among all candidates but receive only around 5 percent of the media coverage. *Per contra*, women candidates in Hungary, Ireland, Romania, and Sweden enjoy more media coverage than their share among candidates would predict. Two outliers, Ireland and Romania, had both one very prominent and controversial female candidate who received the majority of the media attention among women. In Sweden, more gender equal candidate coverage seems to be consistent over time because Sweden was the most gender equal country in terms of news media coverage of candidates in previous studies on European Parliament elections, too (see Banducci et al. 2007).

However, in this thesis I am particularly interested in examining how party-determined viability affects not only women candidates' electoral chances but also their news media visibility. The right-hand graph on Figure 6.1 suggests that party-determined viability affects women's news media coverage. Contrarily to the left-hand

graph on Figure 6.1, the fitted line on the right-hand graph indicates a positive linear relationship between the proportion of women among list leaders and the proportion of media coverage they receive compared to men.

**Figure 6.1: Gender differences in media coverage: 2009 EP elections**



Source: 2009 European Election Media Study

The initial look at the data provides evidence of a gender gap in candidates news media coverage while also suggests that the gap in media coverage may not be as much about gender, as it is about whether women are selected as the most viable candidates. In order to establish if the gap in media coverage is in fact about the selection within party offices, the Chapter continues by testing the same hypothesis with multivariate individual level analysis where I can examine and control for the effect of other predictors of candidate coverage, too.

#### *6.4.1 Results of Candidate-Level Analysis*

In order to examine the gender differences in news media coverage and the factors predicting such differences, I run Heckman selection models with maximum likelihood estimation. I run models both with and without candidates from countries that employ open list preferential voting systems. The reason why I run separate models without candidates from open list voting systems is because I am primarily interested in how the effects of viable candidacy found in Chapter Five carry over (or not) to explain women candidates' news media coverage. Since there is no rank ordering of candidates by party gatekeepers in open list systems, it is necessary to omit the cases from open list systems to study how candidate viability affects candidate news media visibility.

I also run separate models for male and female candidates and compare the differences of the coefficients with Chi Square tests<sup>11</sup>. I apply this approach instead of running a model with all candidates and gender interaction terms because I expect different variances for the two groups.

I also run separate models for election list leaders only to test if “like” female and male candidates receive comparable news media coverage. As proposed in Section 6.1 of the Chapter, in order to compare media coverage of male vs. female candidates, it may be necessary to have “like” candidates, i.e., to compare comparable candidates. I run separate models for list leaders due to measurement issues and data peculiarity. As discussed above, the 2009 EES Media Content Study coded individual media coverage for candidates who were pre-assigned a personal actor code only. Because election list

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<sup>11</sup> I use the suest (seemingly unrelated estimation) command in Stata which combines the estimation results – parameter estimates and associated (co)variance matrices – stored under namelist into one parameter vector and simultaneous (co)variance matrix of the sandwich/robust type. Typical applications of suest are tests for intra-model or cross-model hypotheses.

leaders were over-represented in that sample and since media is likely to cover very viable candidates only, close to 90 per cent of the total candidate coverage was received by the list leaders, leaving too few cases to explore if men and women in lower list positions experienced comparable amounts of media coverage.

Table 6.4 summarises the results of individual media coverage across 25 EU member states (all three voting systems). While party viability is in this case an insignificant selection variable, candidate incumbency is a strong positive predictor of the likelihood of having been assigned an actor code.<sup>12</sup> While both the “All candidates” and “Male candidates” models require the selection procedure (statistically significant rho values), the insignificant rho value of the “Female candidates” model indicates that a regular OLS model for candidates with actor code only would produce similar results to the outcome model.

Let us interpret the outcome models. Based on the findings of Chapter Five, which indicated that women are not less likely to be granted with party-determined viable candidacy than men, and on the mixed results from previous literature, I hypothesised that there is no gender bias in the news media coverage of the 2009 European Parliament elections. Contrarily to expectations, being a woman has a negative effect on the amount of news media coverage a candidate receives, indicating that women attract on average less news media coverage than men. Also, candidates receive more news media coverage in countries with single constituency. This could be because the Media Content Study covers the national media. Therefore, in countries where there is only one constituency, it is likely that campaign takes place at the national level and thus the national media cover it more. On the other hand, in countries

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<sup>12</sup> Due to the fact that incumbency is the only statistically significant selection variable in the models that do not include party-determined candidate viability variables, incumbency could not be included in the outcome equation.

where candidates are elected in several constituencies both the campaign and the campaign coverage are likely to be more localised and therefore less covered in the national media.

Results in Table 6.4 also suggest that context and institutional setting affect women's and men's chances for (extensive) news media coverage differently. Women receive significantly less news media coverage in preferential voting systems than in closed list voting systems; while the opposite holds for men. The statistically significant Chi Square test results indicate that the different estimates for "Female candidate" and "Male candidate" models are statistically significant. Contrarily to expectations, women do not receive more or the same amount of news media coverage in open list preferential voting systems compared to closed list non-preferential voting systems. Therefore, I suspect that being a woman is not enough to distinguish from other (same party) candidates and thereby receive more news media coverage.

Also, overall gender equality appears to have a differential effect on women and men candidates' news media coverage, indicated by the opposite sign of the coefficient. However, one ought to question the relationship as it fails to reach traditional levels of statistical significance. At the same time, quota legislation effects are similar to that of Chapter Five (see Table 5.6, pp. 168), with quotas with or without placement mandate rule failing to increase women's news media coverage.

**Table 6.4: Explaining candidates' individual news media coverage**

	All candidates	Female candidates	Male candidates	Difference: Chi2 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Outcome: Std. News Media Coverage</b>				
Female candidate	-1.26 (0.62) *			
Preferential voting: open lists	0.30 (0.70)	-2.49 (1.09) *	1.16 (0.99)	4.26 *
Preferential voting: ordered lists	1.49 (1.27)	-1.61 (1.61)	2.55 (1.47) +	4.24 *
Gender equality	-0.30 (6.38)	8.98 (8.20)	-3.36 (7.52)	1.73
Simple quotas	-0.20 (1.23)	-2.25 (1.31) +	0.29 (1.36)	3.11 +
Quotas with placement mandates	2.47 (2.26)	-1.83 (1.65)	4.37 (2.98)	3.36 +
One constituency	7.17 (1.07) **	6.00 (1.19) **	7.18 (1.27) **	0.70
Constant	4.22 (3.60)	-1.84 (4.57)	5.81 (4.44)	
<b>Selection: Actor code</b>				
Incumbency	1.19 (0.18) **	1.15 (0.21) **	1.21 (0.19) **	0.12
Viable party	-0.09 (0.06)	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.09 (0.06)	0.00
Constant	-1.60 (0.07) **	-1.81 (0.08) **	-1.51 (0.07) **	
Rho	-0.21 (0.09)	-0.03	-0.26 (0.10)	
(rho=0): chi2(1)	5.65 *	0.03	6.20 *	
Wald Chi2 (df=6)	86.79	53.80	69.65	
N	7661	2724	4911	
Level 2 N	25	25	25	
Censored observations	7133	2600	4507	
Uncensored observations	528	124	404	

\*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05; =p < 0.10; robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

Source: 2009 EP candidate lists; 2009 EES Media Content Study

<sup>a</sup> Chi2 statistic indicates the difference between the estimates of the female candidates and the male candidates models.

Results in Table 6.5 explain more in detail the differences between ordered list preference voting and closed list non-preference voting systems. These models also include measures of candidates' party-determined viability, which allow me to better evaluate how the variables affecting women's chances for viable candidacy are likely to affect the amount of news media coverage they receive.

All selection variables in Table 6.5 show expected results. List leaders, incumbents, and candidates running for a viable party are more likely to have an actor code and thus individually measured media coverage. The results of the outcome models in Table 6.5 are comparable to the outcome models in Table 6.4, suggesting that the identified relationships are robust. When looking at ordered and closed list systems only, women receive less news media coverage than men, after controlling for the selection bias. This suggest that it may not only be the party gatekeepers' fault that women receive less media coverage than men but that media do indeed cover women less than men, regardless of their party-determined viability.

However, when examining columns three and four in Table 6.5, we see that the way in which institutional and contextual variables influence women's and men's news media visibility is surprisingly similar to the way these variables explain their chances for viable candidacy (see Tables 5.6 and 5.7, pp. 168-169). While male candidates receive more media coverage in ordered list preferential voting systems, female candidates do not. To reiterate, the results of Chapter Five showed that male candidates were also more likely to be placed by party gatekeepers on highly viable list positions in ordered list systems while female candidates had better chances for viability in closed list systems. In terms of media visibility, too, women candidates have statistically significantly higher chances for (extensive) news media coverage in closed list systems than in ordered list systems. One possible explanation for that could be that women in

ordered list systems are not granted with as viable candidacy as in closed list systems and therefore they are unable to receive as much media coverage as their colleagues in closed list systems. This claim is further substantiated by the fact that even after controlling for viability as a selection variable, electoral list ranking affects the amount of news media coverage female candidates receive.

**Table 6.5: Explaining candidates' individual news media coverage in closed and ordered list systems**

	All candidates	Female candidates	Male candidates	Difference: Chi2 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Outcome: Std. News Media Coverage</b>				
Female candidate	-1.41 (0.77) +			
Viability: std. list position	-0.79 (1.02)	-3.57 (1.41) *	-0.34 (1.00)	2.66 +
Inc incumbency	1.61 (1.51)	0.90 (1.72)	2.24 (1.42)	0.35
Preferential voting: ordered lists	2.00 (1.34)	-3.38 (1.40) *	3.75 (1.54) *	13.97 **
Gender equality	-3.11 (9.45)	15.52 (8.39) +	-11.63 (11.11)	7.95 **
Simple quotas	-0.12 (1.89)	-2.70 (1.52) +	0.89 (2.13)	3.85 *
Quotas with placement mandates	5.08 (2.98) +	0.45 (1.55)	8.01 (3.76) *	4.35 *
One constituency	6.71 (1.52) **	7.56 (1.31) **	5.85 (1.70) **	1.38
Constant	1.20 (5.67)	-12.66 (4.73) **	5.63 (6.71)	
<b>Selection: Actor code</b>				
Viability: list leader	2.52 (0.19) **	2.88 (0.21) **	2.37 (0.19) **	12.14 **
Inc incumbency	0.54 (0.15) **	0.53 (0.17) **	0.54 (0.15) **	0.01
Viable party	0.45 (0.09) **	0.48 (0.16) **	0.44 (0.08) **	0.07
Constant	-2.58 (0.15) **	-2.84 (0.12) **	-2.45 (0.17) **	
rho	0.06 (0.17)	0.59 (0.28)	0.00 (0.18)	
(rho=0): chi2(1)	0.15	2.50 +	0.00	
Wald Chi2	70.25 (df=8)	356.08 (df=7)	64.88 (df=7)	
Prob > Chi2	0.00	0.00	0.00	
N	5413	2089	3299	
Level 2 N	20	20	20	
Censored observations	5085	2007	3053	
Uncensored observations	328	82	246	

\*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05; =p < 0.10; robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

Source: 2009 EP candidate lists; 2009 EES Media Content Study

<sup>a</sup> Chi2 statistic indicates the difference between the estimates of the female candidates and the male candidates models.

However, in order to properly test the hypothesis that women receive less news media coverage in ordered list systems due to the fact that they are not placed at as viable list positions as female candidates in closed list systems, I run the models presented in columns two and three in Table 6.5 by candidate gender and type of voting systems. If party list position affects female candidates' news media coverage the same way in ordered and closed list systems, there would be a reason to suspect that the relationship holds. However, results in Table 6.6 show that party list ranking (after controlling for list leadership as a selection variable) predicts female candidates' news media coverage in closed list systems only. The same holds for male candidates. Hence, the media do not appear to rely solely on party gatekeepers decisions of viable and thus "interesting" candidacy in ordered list systems. Therefore, one interpretation of the results could be that the stronger gender bias of media coverage in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems is at least in part the media's own creation.

However, it is important to consider the incentives the media have in covering female candidates differently in different voting systems. The one variable not included in the analysis is media "effort" on the part of the candidate. I do not control for how hard candidates in different voting systems campaign in order to receive news media coverage. Since party gatekeepers appear to treat female candidates differently in ordered list voting systems compared to closed list voting systems in regards to their party-determined viability, it is possible that female candidates' campaign strategies vary across voting systems. When women are granted with less viable candidacies in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems, they may also be less likely to put in the extra effort in their campaign to attract more media coverage. Contrarily, women in closed list systems, when ranked high on electoral lists, would probably receive media coverage regardless of their personal campaign as the media coverage in closed

list systems is more likely to be party- and prominent candidate centred. Hence, alternative interpretation of the results of this Chapter would be that party gatekeepers' dismal support for women candidates in ordered list systems does not directly but indirectly explain women's dearth of media coverage in these systems.

Table 6.6 depicts another interesting result. While gender equality affected women's likelihood of viable candidacy the most in closed list systems, it has a statistically significant positive effect on women's news media coverage in ordered list systems only. It is possible that the effect of gender equality on women's news media coverage is mediated by candidate viability in closed list systems. In ordered list systems, however, gender equality may have a positive effect on women's news media coverage because candidate viability (also affected by gender equality) does not predict the amount of news media coverage women receive.

**Table 6.6: Explaining candidates' individual news media coverage by gender and the type of voting system**

	Women in ordered lists	Women in closed lists	Difference: Chi2 <sup>a</sup>	Men in ordered lists	Men in closed lists	Difference: Chi2 <sup>b</sup>
<b>Outcome: Std. News Media Coverage</b>						
Viability: std. list position	1.91 (1.41)	-3.27 (1.57) *	6.37 *	0.82 (1.44)	-3.44 (1.51) *	4.42 *
Inc incumbency	-1.40 (2.25)	1.33 (2.24)	0.78	6.69 (3.56) +	0.33 (1.36)	2.93 +
Gender equality	21.96 (12.41) +	6.76 (20.92)	0.41	-19.11 (15.88)	13.19 (18.65)	1.84
Simple quotas	-4.70 (2.67) +	-2.33 (3.92)	0.27	0.38 (2.94)	-2.04 (3.32)	0.32
Quotas with placement mandates	1.12 (1.89)	-1.03 (1.57)	0.80	-2.14 (6.49)	7.14 (3.74) +	1.61
One constituency	3.50 (2.06) +	8.62 (2.29) **	2.92 +	5.05 (3.57)	7.65 (1.71) **	0.45
Constant	-5.38 (11.44)	-7.13 (10.75)		14.94 (13.59)	-9.50 (9.83)	
<b>Selection: Actor code</b>						
Viability: list leader	2.90 (0.51) **	2.95 (0.15) **	0.01	1.95 (0.24) **	2.76 (0.19) **	7.13 **
Inc incumbency	0.20 (0.24)	0.75 (0.22) **	2.95 +	0.40 (0.23) +	0.60 (0.19) **	0.48
Viable party	0.74 (0.24) **	0.34 (0.23)	1.55	0.40 (0.09) **	0.50 (0.16) **	0.27
Constant	-2.94 (0.32) **	-2.83 (0.16) **		-2.22 (0.21) **	-2.69 (0.18) **	
rho	-0.28 (0.22)	0.41 (0.52)		-0.02 (0.31)	0.41 (0.52)	
(rho=0): chi2(1)	1.35	0.49 +		0.00	0.49 +	
N	802			1327	1972	
Level 2 N	11	9		11	9	
Censored observations	772	1287		1227	1826	
Uncensored observations	30	52		100	146	

\*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05; +p < 0.10; robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

Source: 2009 EP candidate lists; 2009 EES Media Content Study

<sup>a</sup> Chi2 statistic indicates the difference between the estimates of the ordered lists and the closed lists models for women.

<sup>b</sup> Chi2 statistic indicates the difference between the estimates of the ordered lists and the closed lists models for men.

In the beginning of the Chapter I claimed that it may be necessary to question the assumption that media coverage is biased unless women and men receive equal amounts (and similar types) of coverage. One could argue instead that the real gender bias in candidate coverage would only appear if comparable male and female candidates failed to attract comparable amounts of news media attention. In order to test this hypothesis, I run the main models for election list leaders only by candidate gender.

Results in Table 6.7 indicate that even if the sample includes election list leaders only, women nevertheless receive less news media coverage than men. These results suggest that media do not cover equally relatively equal candidates. While the effects of the type of voting system and overall gender equality show the same direction as in full models, the coefficients for both “Female list leaders” and “Male list leaders” model have lost the traditional level of statistical significance. This could be due to the small sample sizes. However, the estimates in question of the “Female list leaders” model differ in statistically significant way from the estimates of the “Male list leaders” model, suggesting that female list leaders have higher chances for news media coverage in closed list systems and in countries with high level of gender equality, while male list leaders receive more news media coverage in ordered list systems and in countries with lower levels of gender equality.

The results that both quotas with placement mandate rule and quotas without placement mandate rule do not increase female candidates’ news media coverage in any of the models indicate that media do not independently respond to quota legislation. It appears that if quotas fail to increase the share of women among viable candidates who are of more interest to the media, the quotas also do not increase the amount of news media coverage female candidates receive.

**Table 6.7: Explaining list leaders' news media coverage in ordered and closed list systems**

	All list leaders	Female list leaders	Male list leaders	Difference: Chi2 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Outcome: Std. News Media Coverage</b>				
Female candidate	-1.72 (0.79) *			
Preferential voting: ordered lists	0.97 (1.66)	-3.38 (2.44)	2.57 (1.89)	4.52 *
Gender equality	0.35 (10.33)	14.46 (10.67)	-8.12 (12.76)	3.51 +
Simple quotas	-0.58 (2.12)	-3.77 (2.02) +	0.70 (2.40)	4.05 *
Quotas with placement mandates	5.08 (2.88) +	-0.95 (1.32)	8.25 (3.74) *	5.81 *
One constituency	7.35 (1.93) **	7.92 (2.24) **	6.53 (2.05) **	0.55
Constant	2.82 (5.45)	-4.69 (5.88)	6.10 (6.66)	
<b>Selection: Actor code</b>				
Incumbency	0.81 (0.14) **	1.21 (0.41) **	0.72 (0.19) **	0.86
Viable party	0.97 (0.21) **	1.22 (0.34) **	0.92 (0.23) **	0.57
Constant	-0.13 (0.18)	-0.19 (0.17)	-0.12 (0.20)	
rho	-0.15 (0.10)	-0.08 (0.22)	-0.18 (0.11)	
(rho=0): chi2(1)	2.13	0.13	2.24	
Wald Chi2 (df=5)	57.68	52.36	52.77	
N	457	115	342	
Level 2 N	20	19	20	
Censored observations	179	43	136	
Uncensored observations	278	72	206	

\*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05; =p < 0.10; robust standard errors (clustered by country) in parentheses.

Source: 2009 EP candidate lists; 2009 EES Media Content Study

<sup>a</sup>Chi2 statistic indicates the difference between the estimates of the female candidates and the male candidates models.

## **6.5 Final comments**

Many scholars report that women candidates receive smaller amounts of news media coverage than male candidates (Banducci et al. 2007; Kahn 2003; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). However, more recent studies have failed to find empirical evidence that the amount of media coverage that male and female candidates obtain varies significantly (Heldman et al. 2009; Smith 1997; Uscinski and Goren 2011). While the current literature offers interesting and consistent examples of how the media treat female and male candidates differently in terms of the tone and type of coverage, we have limited knowledge of why some studies find and others fail to find differential media treatment of men and women. In this Chapter, I expected that women's news media coverage during electoral campaigns is not an independent process, but influenced by the behaviour of different actors, i.e. parties, candidates, voters, and by the electoral rules and overall context. Therefore, I hypothesised that the gender bias in candidate coverage depends on specific electoral rules, such as the type of voting systems, and on party gatekeepers' decisions when ranking candidates in electoral lists.

Most importantly, this research demonstrates that in the context of the European Parliament elections women candidates do receive less news media coverage than their male contenders. The results also show that among the most viable candidates, election list leaders, women are underrepresented. However, that alone does not explain the gender bias in news media coverage. When comparing the most viable candidates' (list leaders') news media visibility, the gender bias persists. Therefore, at least part of the gender bias in candidate coverage appears to be the media's own creation.

Moreover, the results also suggest that the way context and institutional variables affect women's news media visibility are very similar to the way the same variables predict women's likelihood of being assigned a viable candidacy. This suggests that party gatekeepers and media personnel follow similar cues sent by the

context and institutional rules. For example, in more gender equal societies women do not only have higher chances for viable candidacy, but they also are likely to receive more news media coverage. The reason why both party gatekeepers and media personnel support female candidacy more in more gender equal countries is probably because in these societies (i) there are more women to cover, (ii) there are more women in key positions deciding who is ranked high in electoral lists and who gets more media coverage, and (iii) both party gatekeepers and the newsroom perceive more demand from the wider public to field more viable candidates and cover them more in the media, too.

Similarly to women candidates' party-determined viability, also their news media visibility is affected by the type of voting system in which they run. While I expected in the beginning of the Chapter that women receive more or at least as much news media coverage in open list systems as in closed list systems, the data did not support this hypothesis. Apparently, being a woman is not novel and/or valued enough to gain more media coverage in a system where campaign coverage ought to be more candidate- than party-centred. Moreover, female candidates suffer from an especially great dearth of media coverage in countries that employ ordered list systems. One could expect it to be due to the fact that women also were placed lower in the electoral lists in ordered list systems. However, the data from the European Parliament elections do not fully support this assumption as electoral list ranking failed to predict candidate visibility in ordered list systems. Rather, it is likely that women in ordered list systems, once ranked unfavourably by party-gatekeepers, also fail to campaign hard to increase their likelihood of extensive news media coverage. Alternatively, it is also possible that the news media ignores women candidates' campaign efforts.

The fact that women suffer from less viable list positions in ordered list systems and also fail to make up this less favourable starting position with (extensive) news

media coverage suggests that female candidates are likely to be disadvantaged in winning elected seats. As a result, such cues provided by less viable list rankings for women and minimal female candidate coverage in ordered list systems are that women are not as “normal” in the political world as men. This is not only likely to have implications for the election of women in current elections but in future elections, too. By reinforcing the gender bias the media thus encourage party elites’ gender biased decisions when nominating and soliciting candidates in future elections, too.

Thus, for female candidates the contextual political environment can either stimulate or reduce their chances for news media coverage. In conclusion, the mechanism that men largely dominate the media coverage of electoral campaigns helps to extend the belief that politics is a man’s world. I assume that media portrayal of candidates is likely to affect voters’ choices at the voting booths, too, and thus influence the number of women elected. It is for the next Chapter to uncover how the effects and mechanisms found thus far affect women’s likelihood of winning elected seats.

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## 7 CANDIDATE GENDER AND ELECTORAL SUCCESS

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*Gender and politics research has often found that candidate gender has little to no effect on election outcomes. /.../ The role of gender in election outcomes should not be dismissed in comparative research just because the direction and the size of gender's effect vary across countries. In fact, we need more research on how the individual characteristics of female candidates, the parties to which they belong and the districts in which they are running affect their prospects for election. /.../ Comparative gender research can benefit substantially from a more individual-level approach to studying women's political representation.*

*(Schwindt-Bayer et al. 2010: 706-707)*

In the beginning of the thesis, I set an aim to explain the election of women at the individual level across different types of PR list systems. As mentioned before, women's candidacy and representation are not immune to the features of the electoral system. Many scholars show that women have higher levels of descriptive representation in countries that employ proportional representation with high district

magnitude compared to single-member district plurality / majority systems (see for example, Caul 1999; Darcy et al. 1994; Hogan 2001; Matland and Studlar 1998; Norris 1996; Norris and Franklin 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Reynolds 1999; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). However, proportional electoral systems differ considerably from one another, most notably in regard to the openness of the ballot structure (preference or non-preference voting). Also, the proportion of women elected under proportional electoral rules varies from one country to another. This all suggests that besides the proportionality of electoral system there are other institutional features, too, that are likely to affect the election of women.

Previous empirical chapters support this claim. In Chapter Four, the data show, for example, that at the aggregate level women have higher chances to turn their candidacy into an elected seat in a non-preferential than in a preferential proportional electoral system. Chapter Five demonstrates that one of the reasons for this may be that women are granted with less viable party list rankings in preferential ordered list systems than in non-preferential closed list systems. Furthermore, Chapter Six suggests that women also receive less news media coverage in preferential than in non-preferential voting systems. These results do not only propose that women are likely to have lower chances of winning an elected seat in preferential compared to non-preferential voting systems (unless they are able to make up the unfavourable party and media treatment with preference votes) but they also provide some explanations to why there are less women elected in PR list electoral systems that allow preference votes.

Hence, past chapters demonstrate the need to incorporate individual and party level variables in the analysis when explaining women's likelihood of descriptive representation across countries. Therefore, this Chapter continues with the individual level approach and seeks out to explain who, why, and under which conditions is the

most likely to get elected. In other words, this Chapter aims to explain the final phase of the electoral process – the actual election of women.

The central purpose of this Chapter is, therefore, to investigate why women fare worse in systems where voters can give preference votes compared to closed list voting systems. But with this Chapter I also wish to conclude this research and explain how party gatekeepers' decisions and the news media coverage candidates receive in different contextual and institutional settings affect women's chances to win the office.

Similarly to previous chapters, this Chapter also aims to go beyond describing differences in the aggregate level data. As argued in previous chapters of the thesis, by focusing on explaining the overall level of women's descriptive representation across countries only, we may obscure some important aspects of the election process and the bias women may face in different stages of election (see also Schwindt-Bayer et al. 2010). Hence, in order to understand better how variables at different level affect the election of women, an individual level approach is necessary.

In this Chapter, I employ the 2009 European Election Study's Candidate Survey and Media Content Data. These studies enable me to examine how different institutional and contextual variables affect individual candidates' electoral chances dependent on their gender. The unique individual level data collected during the European Parliament elections allow this research to control for other main predictors of candidates' electoral success too, such as their political experience, ambition, campaign effort, amount of individual news media coverage, and their party ideology.

## **7.1 Expectations and hypotheses**

Chapter Two discusses and summarises the main predictors identified by past research that are likely to affect the election of women. In order to avoid any

unnecessary repetition, I concentrate in this section on the mechanisms explaining why traditional predictors of women's descriptive representation influence women's individual electoral chances the way they do.

### *7.1.1 Electoral rules, women's party-determined viability, and the election of women*

One of the central themes of this thesis is to explain how specific electoral rules employed in PR list systems influence, on individual level, the process of progressing from candidates to elected representatives. As covered in Chapter Two, women are reported to enjoy higher levels of descriptive representation in proportional electoral systems compared to plurality-majority systems (Caul 1999; Matland and Studlar 1998; Norris 1996; Norris and Franklin 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Reynolds 1999; Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler 2005). These findings are explained by the fact that in PR list systems, parties have the possibility of balancing their ticket to attract more voters and to avoid internal party disputes between different factions of the party (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Matland 2005), and thus run more women in their lists.

Previous research provides consistent empirical evidence that women benefit from proportional electoral systems. However, as mentioned earlier, there are large variations in the proportion of women elected to different legislative bodies in countries that all employ multimember district proportional electoral systems. Moreover, we also know that PR list systems do not only differ from each other in terms of district magnitude but also in terms of whether parties or voters decide the division of the seats awarded to a party. Several scholars claim that the particular voting system (i.e. closed list voting and preferential voting) employed in PR list systems can affect the election of women, too, as both parties and candidates are likely to behave differently in different voting systems (Katz 1980).

For example, party gatekeepers may select different types of candidates as viable candidates under different electoral rules (Hazan and Voerman 2006). This thesis has taken the argument further by claiming that the combination of different electoral rules and candidate selection procedures affects the election of women, too. Chapter Five provides empirical evidence that female candidates are granted by party gatekeepers with varying levels of viability under different electoral rules. A question that still needs to be answered is whether the gender differences in list rankings in different electoral systems also carry over to the Election Day. In other words, does the less favourable party-determined viability of women in ordered list systems mean that women also have lower likelihood of getting elected in ordered list systems than in closed list systems; or can women make up the less advantaged starting position with preference votes?

Closed party lists put the responsibility on the political party to balance the representation of different demographics, interests, and groups among candidates. I argued in Chapter Five, that this is likely to increase women candidates' party-determined viability as different interest groups and party factions have a specific group, the party gatekeepers, to hold responsible for supporting women. Empirical evidence from Chapter Five supports this claim: in closed lists systems parties not only balance their party lists but also balance the "viable" part of the list. Since favourable party list ranking is crucial for winning an elected seat in closed list non-preferential voting systems, I expect women to fare electorally better in closed list systems than in other PR list systems.

While in open list systems parties do not determine individual candidate's viability as they do in closed list systems, in the former case too, there is an incentive for parties to balance their ticket. By doing so, a party may guarantee that different segments of voters can choose a suitable representative(s) from the given party's list and thus ensure a good overall result. In the case of open list systems it is up to parties

to field enough female candidates but ultimately it is voters' responsibility to ensure women's representation by voting for them. Aggregate level data used in Chapter Four suggest that parties field as many female candidates in open list systems as they do in closed list systems. This leads me to expect that female candidates do not fare any worse in open lists systems than in closed lists systems.

However, results from Chapter Six give reason for some caution. When exploring the amount of news media coverage female candidates receive, data from the 2009 European Parliament elections suggest that women are covered less in the news media in open list systems than in closed list systems. This is an important finding to consider because candidates' news media visibility should affect their individual likelihood of winning in open list preferential voting systems. Candidate's individual news media coverage is likely to be one of the few cues available to voters when evaluating same party candidates and deciding preference votes. Unlike in ordered and closed list systems, voters in purely preferential open list systems have less knowledge of which individual candidates parties consider to be the most valuable because no prior list ranking of candidates by party gatekeepers is available. Therefore, the extent of news media coverage individual candidates receive could replace for voters in open list systems the party cues voters have in ordered and closed list systems when selecting whom to vote for. Hence, media can be seen as an intervening variable explaining why women in open list preferential voting systems are likely to have lower likelihood of being elected than women in closed list systems. Considering that parties do not field more female candidates in open list systems than in closed list systems and that female candidates in open list systems are less visible in the news media to the voters, I expect women to have a lower likelihood of getting elected in open list systems than in closed list systems.

But besides open and closed list systems there are also ordered list systems. It could be considered as a grey area between open list and closed list voting systems. In ordered list systems parties affect individual candidates' electoral chances with the initial list placement. However, the parties cannot be held solely responsible for impeding women's representation, because voters have the opportunity to change the list order with preference votes. This means that party gatekeepers may have less incentive to include more women in viable list positions as the chain of responsibility is weaker. Indeed, results from Chapter Five support this claim: party gatekeepers are less inclined to place women in highly viable list rankings in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems.

While party gatekeepers in ordered list voting systems may publically consider their list rankings irrelevant, the fact that parties rank their candidates in ordered lists is likely to have consequences for the way in which candidates and their electoral campaigns are presented to the voters. Therefore, one could ask what voters can actually decide in ordered list systems and how prior ranking affects their vote choice. In the case of the European Parliament elections, large constituencies (in most cases an entire country) are defined. Past research suggests that voters are likely to identify less with candidates in large constituencies and thus they will tend to use preferential votes less (Katz 1980). Therefore, list ranking is likely to matter to a large extent also in ordered list systems at the European Parliament elections.

Nevertheless, let us assume that preference votes matter to some extent in ordered list voting systems at the European Parliament elections. What possibilities female candidates have to make up their relatively less favourable list position? One option would be to spend more resources on their campaign. Hazan and Voerman (2006) point out that those candidates who are placed lower in electoral lists in ordered list systems will need more money to carry out a successful campaign to make up the

poorer list ranking than candidates who are more favoured by the party gatekeepers. Literature on women's representation does not provide much confidence that extensive campaign funding would be women's key to success in ordered list systems. To the contrary, this literature suggests that one reason why women are disadvantaged in politics is that they have fewer resources, including campaign funding, to secure their seat (Lawless and Fox 2005; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). Therefore, campaign funding is not likely to make up female candidates' weak party-determined viability in ordered list systems. However, women could put in more time to their campaign, another important campaign resource, to increase their electoral competitiveness.

Second, extensive news media coverage is likely to help candidates in lower list positions to gain more preference votes in ordered list systems, because being visible in the news media should increase female candidates' recognition rates among voters. However, evidence from Chapter Six makes women's outlook grim. To reiterate, female candidates received less news media coverage in ordered list systems than in non-preferential closed list voting systems. Therefore, all things considered, female candidates appear to have lower chances of winning in ordered list systems than in closed list systems. This is likely due to the fact that both the parties and the media treat women in the former systems less favourably.

Therefore, this Chapter's central expectation is that the variance in women's party-determined viability and women's news media coverage across different voting systems is likely to explain women candidates' likelihood of winning the elected seat. In other words, I treat party-determined candidate viability and candidates' individual news media coverage as intervening variables explaining why women in non-preference voting systems are likely to be electorally more successful than women in PR list electoral systems where preference votes are available. This expectation brings us back to Figure 2.3 in Chapter Two. As depicted on the Figure 2.3 (see p. 76), I expect female

candidates' party-determined viability to be influenced by the type of voting system in which they run. However, I expect the voting system to have an indirect effect (through party-determined candidate viability and candidates' individual news media coverage) rather than a direct effect on women's likelihood of winning an elected seat.

### *7.1.2 Overall gender equality and the election of women*

Besides party-determined viability, there are also other institutional, contextual, and individual level factors that are likely to affect the election of women. In democratic elections it is difficult to downplay the role of the voters (especially in preferential voting systems). The important role of the voters is also emphasised by previous research on women's representation which to a large extent, in the 1970s and '80s, was only concerned about whether voters punished or praised female candidates (Darcy and Schramm 1977; Kelley and McAllister 1983; Vallance 1983). The main hypothesis in terms of female candidate's electoral success is about possible sexist stereotyping by voters who might rather vote for a male than a female candidate just because he is a man.

I study the "sexist voter impact" on women's likelihood of getting elected by controlling for the overall levels of gender equality in the society. One of the expectations regarding overall gender equality in Chapter Two was that women are more likely to win an elected seat in a more gender equal society because voters in these societies support female candidacy more. In a society where men and women are more equal to each other there are not only a larger number of eligible female aspirants and candidates but also the wider electorate should be more likely to view politics as a suitable profession for women. Also, previous research supports the idea that women candidates do better in more women-friendly constituencies (Ondercin and Welch 2009;

Welch and Studlar 1996). Hence, if there is a sign of sexist stereotyping by voters, it is likely that women in less gender equal societies are less likely to win an elected seat.

### *7.1.3 Candidates' news media coverage and the election of women*

In section 7.1.1, I discussed how candidates' individual news media coverage is likely to explain as an intervening variable why women running in non-preferential voting systems are more likely to get elected than women competing for an elected seat in preferential voting systems. However, as shown on Figure 2.3 (p. 76), I also expect candidates' news media coverage to have a direct effect on women's electoral chances.

Therefore, I also include news media coverage of the campaign as a possible determinant of female candidates' electoral success. I hypothesise that the amounts of news media coverage female candidates receive is a likely and so far neglected explanatory factor of women candidates' chances of becoming elected. Previous studies as well as Chapter Six of the current thesis report gender bias in candidate coverage with women receiving relatively less news media coverage than their share among candidates would predict them to gain (Banducci et al. 2007; Heldman et al. 2000; Kahn and Goldenberg 1991). Moreover, empirical evidence from Chapter Six further suggests that women do not only receive less news media coverage than men but that women's news media coverage also varies across different voting systems and different societies.

In this Chapter, I argue that this differential news media coverage is likely to affect women's electoral chances not only indirectly but directly, too. Candidates who receive more attention in the news media are more easily recognisable to their potential voters and hence have higher chances of becoming elected. Without being visible, female candidates have little impact on the overall mass political engagement, including voter turnout among female electorate (Banducci et al. 2007). In order to become elected voters need to recognise the candidates. However, since variations in the amount

of media coverage can influence recognition rates, gender bias in the news media attention may result in considerable electoral consequences (Goldenberg and Traugott 1987). I therefore expect that candidates who receive more media coverage are more likely to get elected. But as explained above, I also treat individual news media coverage as an intervening variable that is likely to explain to a certain extent why women fare electorally worse under certain institutional rules than under others.

#### *7.1.4 Candidate quotas and the election of women*

Another central theme of this thesis has been to study the effect of candidate gender quotas in the process of electing women. As stated before, while candidate gender quotas are usually employed in order to increase the proportion of women elected, they often are likely to increase the share of women among candidates only. Aggregate level analyses in Chapter Four support this claim. While the proportion of women among candidates is higher in countries that apply quota legislation, the quota rules have no effect on the proportion of women among elected MEPs. Also Chapters Five and Six further support the assumption that quotas tend to have little effect beyond increasing the number of women among candidates. Therefore, I expect candidate gender quotas employed at the 2009 European Parliament elections to be inefficient in increasing female candidates' likelihood of winning elected seats.

Table 7.1 summarises the central expectations concerning female candidate's likelihood of electoral success based on the discussion above.

**Table 7.1: Central expectations of women's electoral success**

Predictors	DV: (Female) candidate's likelihood of winning
Candidate viability	Positive effect
Candidate's news media visibility	Positive effect
Preference voting: open lists	No direct effect; negative indirect effect due to limited news media coverage
Preference voting: ordered lists	No direct effect; negative indirect effect due to less viable party list placement and limited news media coverage
Overall gender equality	Positive effect
Quotas without placement mandate	No effect
Quotas with placement mandate	No effect

### *7.1.5 Other variables predicting women's likelihood of winning an elected seat*

In this section, I introduce the control variables that this Chapter includes in the analysis.

Candidates with extensive political experience are expected to be electorally more successful. Incumbent office holders and other party members with extensive political experience either in party, local, and/or national level are on average more likely to be favoured in the eyes of the parties, media, and the voters (Matland and Studlar 1998; Ondercin and Welch 2009). While previous chapters provided limited evidence that political experience and / or incumbency help candidates to receive more viable list ranking or gain more media coverage, political experience is nevertheless likely to increase individual candidates' chances of winning an MEP seat. For example, in preference voting systems the voters can use political experience and incumbency as a shortcut when deciding their preference vote. In other words (positive) political "track-record" is likely to assure voters of candidate's competence and suitability for the elected office. Such an expectation is also supported by previous literature which provides consistent evidence that incumbent office holders have an advantage in the

electoral process (Kahn and Goldenberg 1991; Matland and Studlar 1998; Ondercin and Welch 2009; Welch and Studlar 1996).

Besides the aforementioned, this research also controls for the effects of individual political ambition, campaign effort, candidate's party ideology, and district magnitude. Lawless and Fox (2005) studied the impact of gender gap in political ambition on women's candidacy and reported it to be an important predictor of female candidacy. Herein I argue that political ambition may not only determine one's candidacy but is also likely to impact her chances of getting elected. Candidates who are politically more ambitious are likely to both gain more support from their political party as well as work harder on their campaign than their less-ambitious contenders. This should result in more ambitious candidates being also more successful in winning an elected seat. Therefore, the current Chapter also controls for campaign effort. Besides that, similarly to previous chapters and past research, I expect women to fare better if they run in larger districts (countries with single-constituencies) or if they run for a left-wing, liberal or ecological party.

## **7.2 Data and measurement**

This Chapter relies on two components of the 2009 European Election Study by utilising simultaneously the 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data and the 2009 EES Media Content Study. The unique possibility to link the amount of individual news media coverage candidates received (Media Study data) to his/her survey responses (Candidate Survey data) allows this Chapter to study not only how the type of voting system affects female candidates' electability but also to control for all the above mentioned predictors of candidate's electoral success cross-nationally.

As emphasised in Chapter Three, the European Parliament elections provide an excellent testing ground for the main hypotheses of this research. To reiterate, there are three main types of voting systems utilised for the election of members of the European Parliament: open list preference voting, ordered list preference voting, and closed list non-preference voting. The most popular system is that of ordered list preferential voting system, employed in eleven EU member states. Open list system is used in seven member states, including countries that employ STV. While closed list system is used in nine member states, more than half of all the MEP seats are divided by using this rule (see Table E in Appendix 2).

In this Chapter, I utilise the 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data previously used in Chapter Five, and the Media Content Study Data previously used in Chapter Six. In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, I do not explain the main data features once again. To recall the features of these data sources, please, see Sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3 in Chapter Three (pp. 87-90). In this Chapter, similarly to Chapter Five (see p. 151), I use for the Candidate Survey data a combined survey weight for party affiliation and the number of MEPs per country in order to increase the representativeness of the analysis.

This Chapter links the data from the 2009 EES Media Content Study to the 209 EES Candidate Survey data. To reiterate, how the final data set used in the Chapter was constructed, see Section 3.4.4 (see pp. 90-93) and Figure 3.5 (see p. 93) in Chapter Three for illustration. In being able to access the exclusive Candidate Survey data set which includes each respondent's name, I could manually link the amount of media coverage a candidate received to her / his survey responses. However, not all candidates who received media coverage were identifiable in the Media Study because not all candidates were assigned a personal actor code by the Media Content Study team. This means that only media coverage of candidates who were assigned a personal actor code can be linked to the Candidate Survey data set.

Also, not all candidates whose news media coverage was individually measured by the Media Content Study participated in the Candidate Survey. In order to incorporate all candidates with individually measured news media coverage when explaining individual candidate's likelihood of winning, I could link the media coverage of candidates to the candidate lists, like I did in Chapter Six. However, due to the question of interest in this Chapter, I find it more appropriate to employ Candidate Survey responses instead of candidate lists in order to control for the individual level predictors (i.e. political experience, other than incumbency; political ambition; level at which candidate is selected; time dedicated to campaigning, etc.) that are not measurable by relying solely on the candidate lists. Thus, for Chapter Seven, I link candidates' individual news media coverage to their survey responses. Out of the 528 candidates whose media coverage could be individually recorded in the Media Content Data, 89 participated in the Candidate Survey. To all other Candidate Survey respondents I assigned a value "0" for news media coverage, acknowledging that zero values include both candidates who possibly received media coverage but whose media coverage was not individually recorded, and candidates who received no media coverage.

### *7.2.1 Measurement*

The central dependent variable employed in this Chapter is dichotomous – either a candidate was elected to the European Parliament or not.

The central independent variable is candidate's party-determined viability. I use the same overall measure of candidate's viability, developed by Giebler et al. (2010), as in Chapter Five. The categorisation of the viability variable is based on the candidate's list position in relation to the potential number of seats won by her party (Hix et al. 2009). In this way, the measure will also take into account candidate's party's overall

viability. For countries with open list preference voting systems (Denmark, Finland, Italy, Luxembourg, and Poland), all candidates were set on the same list position, which is why candidates from these countries are excluded from part of the analyses. In order to incorporate uncertainty to the measure, the standard deviation of discrepancy between the predictions and the seats that were actually won was calculated for each country. As a result, candidates with a list position below the predicted seats minus one standard deviation were classified as “safe” candidates. Candidates with a list position above the predicted seats plus one standard deviation were classified as “unpromising” candidates, and all other candidates were classified as “doubtful” (Giebler et al. 2010). This Chapter employs dummy variables for candidates’ viability (determined by party), “unpromising candidate” being the reference category.

The type of election system employed for the 2009 European election is another central independent variable. Member states are classified as stated in Chapter Three (see Table E in Appendix 2 for illustration). For the analysis, dichotomous variables are used, closed list non-preference voting system being the baseline category. Also candidate’s gender is measured as a dummy variable, with the male candidate being the reference category.

For measuring overall gender equality in the society, I utilise once more the original gender equality index developed and explained in Chapter Three (see pp. 99-101) and Table F in Appendix 2. I operationalise candidate gender quotas similarly to Chapter Five and Six by adding to the model dichotomous variables of gender quotas without placement mandates and gender quotas with placement mandates, no gender quotas being the baseline category.

Candidate’s political ambition is measured with two dichotomous variables (similarly to Chapter Five): political ambition for European Parliament (MEP) and political ambition for national parliament (MP). Also, for candidate’s political

experience I use the same measure as in Chapter Five. I utilise the 2009 EES Candidate Survey Data political experience index. In this Chapter, too, I control for party ideology. I measure candidate's party ideology with a dichotomous variable that identifies a membership in a left-wing, liberal or an ecological party with value "1" and a membership in a right-wing or conservative party with value "0". To recall the exact measurement of these variables, see Appendix 2.

Past research reports that women have higher levels of descriptive representation in constituencies where more seats are divided. Therefore, I also control for district magnitude. At EP elections, the more substantive differences between constituencies are not perhaps the number of seats per country but whether the country constitutes a single-constituency or multiple constituencies. I, thus, employ a dummy variable indicating whether the candidate is running in a country with a single (1) or more constituencies (0) as a proxy for district magnitude.

The analysis utilises logistic regression models because the dependent variable employed in this Chapter is dichotomous. In order to avoid inflated standard errors, robust standard errors (clustered by country) are reported since the data are hierarchical and the models include besides individual level variables also some country and party level variables.

### 7.3 Results

Before proceeding to test how institutional and contextual factors affect female candidates' electoral chances, the Chapter first examines how party-determined candidate viability impacts her likelihood of electoral success across voting systems.

Table 7.2 shows that in all PR list voting systems candidates' electoral success is dependent on their party-determined viability. The third column in Table 7.2 indicates

the importance of overall party viability on individual candidate's electoral success in open list systems<sup>13</sup>. The reason why the effects of viability are considerably smaller in open list systems compared to ordered and closed list systems is because in the former system this measure does not tap into candidate's individual prestige. However, as expected, the combination of candidate's list position and her party's general viability has the strongest effect on her electoral success in non-preference voting systems. The effect is also large in preferential voting systems with ordered lists, indicating that the power of preference votes in ordered list systems is limited. These results suggest that candidates' pre-determined viability, i.e. election list ranking, strongly influences their likelihood of winning, suggesting that voters follow party gatekeepers' cues of candidate viability to a large extent in ordered list voting systems.

**Table 7.2: Party-determined candidate viability predicting candidates' electoral success: logit estimates**

	All candidates	Preference voting: open lists	Preference voting: ordered lists	Non-preference voting: closed lists
Safe candidate	6.17 (0.85) **	3.91 (1.13) **	6.28 (1.33) **	10.23 (1.12) **
Doubtful candidate	2.94 (0.48) **	2.12 (0.48) **	4.31 (0.97) **	3.72 (1.14) **
Female	0.15 (0.59)	0.37 (1.36)	-0.89 (0.65)	-0.06 (0.61)
Constant	-3.51 (0.52) **	-2.91 (0.89) **	-4.06 (0.79) **	-4.21 (1.15) **
N	1528	219	565	744
Level 2 N	25	5	11	9
Pseudo R2	0.55	0.27	0.59	0.75
Wald Chi2 (df=3)	67.82	7425.29	42.94	83.94
Prob > Chi2	0.00	0.27	0.00	0.00

\*\*p<0.01; clustered standard errors in parentheses; reference categories: “unpromising” candidate, male candidate.

Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey

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<sup>13</sup> Each candidate from the same party is given the same viability score in open list systems as no “objective” individual measure of viability, such as party list placement, is available in these systems. In ordered and closed list systems each candidate's viability score varies from her party members as the score combines candidate's individual list placement with her party's general viability.

The central expectations of this Chapter are that (i) party-determined viability is the strongest predictor of candidates' electoral success, and (ii) the reason why women fare worse in preference voting systems compared to non-preference voting systems is likely to be caused by party gatekeepers' dismal support of viable female candidacy in ordered list preference voting systems. I thus explore how party-determined viability affects women's and men's likelihood of being elected.

Table 7.3 summarises the actual percentage of women and men elected, depending on their party-determined viability. Most importantly, 65 per cent of female candidates and 74 per cent of male candidates who are classified as "safe" candidates are elected across different types of PR list electoral systems. While "safe" female candidates are elected less often than "safe" male candidates, slightly less viable "doubtful" female candidates are elected more often than "doubtful" male candidates. These results suggest that women candidates are somewhat more successful than men to turn their candidacy into an elected seat without the full support of party gatekeepers.

It is important to remember that "doubtful" candidates have in general much lower likelihood of getting elected than "safe" candidates, especially in closed list voting systems. Somewhat surprisingly, however, women in closed list systems turn their "doubtful" candidacy into an elected seat more often than "doubtful" women candidates in ordered list systems. Since no preference votes are given in closed list voting systems, parties that rank order women slightly less viably than men have gained more seats than expected. However, the fact that "doubtful" female candidates are elected less often than "doubtful" male candidates in ordered list systems suggests that voters do not help women to make up their slightly less viable list positions in ordered list systems.

**Table 7.3: Percentage of candidates elected by party-determined viability and candidate sex**

	% "Safe" candidates elected	% "Doubtful" candidates elected	% "Unpromising" candidates elected
Female candidates	65.2 (n=30)	38.8 (n=26)	0.5 (n=2)
Male candidates	74.3 (n=55)	29.9 (n=40)	1.8 (n=14)
All candidates	70.8 (n=85)	32.8 (n=66)	1.3 (n=16)
<hr/>			
Open list systems			
Female candidates	22.2 (n=4)	21.4 (n=3)	1.9 (n=1)
Male candidates	42.9 (n=12)	14.3 (n=3)	8.1 (n=7)
All candidates	34.8 (n=16)	17.1 (n=6)	5.8 (n=8)
<hr/>			
Ordered list systems			
Female candidates	85.7 (n=6)	38.1 (n=8)	0.5 (n=1)
Male candidates	82.4 (n=14)	42.4 (n=14)	2.0 (n=6)
All candidates	83.3 (n=20)	40.7 (n=22)	1.4 (n=7)
<hr/>			
Closed list systems			
Female candidates	95.2 (n=20)	46.9 (n=15)	0.0 (n=0)
Male candidates	100.0 (n=29)	28.9 (n=23)	0.3 (n=1)
All candidates	98.0 (n=49)	33.9 (n=38)	0.2 (n=1)

Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey

Findings presented in Table 7.3 are raw percentage points and thus I have not controlled for any other factor influencing the election of women. Hence I proceed with multivariate analyses.

In this thesis, I pay close attention to the effects of the openness of the ballot structure (type of voting system), the overall gender equality and the impact of other traditional aggregate level predictors of women's descriptive representation on female candidates' individual electoral success. In order to test how these traditional predictors explain women candidates' individual likelihood of electoral success, I first run a model excluding individual level independent variables. I do this in order to demonstrate whether and how the effect of these traditional predictors may change if we control or not for individual level factors. I run separate models for male and female candidates and compare the differences of the coefficients with Chi Square tests<sup>14</sup>. I apply this

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<sup>14</sup> I use the suest (seemingly unrelated estimation) command in Stata which combines

approach instead of running a model with all candidates and gender interaction terms because I expect different variances for the two groups.

First, results in Table 7.4 suggest that women are in general not less likely (or more likely) than men to be elected to the European Parliament. As expected in the beginning of the Chapter, candidate quotas do not affect women candidates' chances of getting elected. This is also in line with the results from previous Chapters, which indicate that quotas applied at the European Parliament elections have little or no effect beyond explaining the proportion of women among all candidates (viable and non-viable). Table 7.4 also shows that women do not fare worse in open list voting systems compared to closed list voting systems. Hence, despite of the dearth of individual news media coverage women received in open list systems, they manage to gain enough preference votes to have the same chances of winning an office as women in closed list systems. However, female candidates have a lower likelihood of getting elected in ordered list preferential voting systems than in closed list non-preferential voting systems<sup>15</sup>. Women candidates are also more likely to enjoy electoral success if they run in a society where gender equality is high. These results are well in line with the hypothesis and with the results from previous chapters.

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the estimation results – parameter estimates and associated (co)variance matrices – stored under namelist into one parameter vector and simultaneous (co)variance matrix of the sandwich/robust type. Typical applications of suest are tests for intra-model or cross-model hypotheses.

<sup>15</sup> I also estimated the models presented in Table 7.4 with open list preference voting being the reference category to control for the differences between open and ordered list systems in regards to the election of women. The separately estimated models show that women in ordered list systems have a lower likelihood of being elected than women in open list systems, at a 95% confidence level. This indicates that women have different chances for an elected seat in different types of preferential voting systems.

**Table 7.4: Explaining candidates' electoral success with contextual and institutional variables: logit estimates**

	All candidates	Female candidates	Male candidates	Difference: Chi2
Female	0.07 (0.48)			
Preference voting: open list	0.25 (0.27)	0.38 (0.64)	0.26 (0.57)	0.01
Preference voting: ordered list	-0.31 (0.40)	-1.34 (0.63) *	0.06 (0.51)	5.19 *
Gender equality	-1.09 (2.30)	4.64 (2.04) *	-4.17 (3.21)	6.60 *
Simple quotas	0.34 (0.54)	1.05 (0.84)	0.04 (0.83)	0.69
Placement quotas	1.81 (0.45) **	0.70 (0.50)	1.51 (0.47) **	2.27
Left / liberal / green party	0.67 (0.41)	0.39 (0.69)	0.65 (0.56)	0.07
Single constituency	0.81 (0.34) *	2.05 (0.71) **	0.28 (0.60)	2.48
Constant	-2.10 (1.310)	-5.94 (1.34) **	-0.11 (1.76)	
N	1528	529	999	
Level 2 N	25	24	25	
Pseudo R2	0.09	0.14	0.11	
Wald Chi2	37.25(df=8)	54.85(df=7)	30.93(df=7)	
Prob > Chi2	0.00	0.00	0.00	

\*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; +p<0.10; clustered standard errors in parentheses; reference categories: “unpromising” candidate, male candidate.

Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey

In general, results in Table 7.4 are comparable to the results obtained in Chapters Five and Six. Therefore, it appears that the institutional setting and wider context affect similarly (i) women candidates' likelihood of being placed in viable party list rankings by party gatekeepers, (ii) the amount of news media coverage female candidates receive, and (iii) women candidates' likelihood of electoral success. This may lead to the assumption that the reason why women fare electorally better in non-preferential voting systems compared to ordered list preferential voting systems is because they lack support from party gatekeepers and they suffer from smaller amounts of news media coverage in the latter systems. However, in order to test this claim, it is necessary to include variables of party-determined candidate viability and candidates' individual news media coverage in the models.

I first run a model including candidates from all 25 EU member states that use PR list system for the election of MEPs. However, this means that I cannot include the

party-determined viability measure in the model because in open list systems it describes individual candidate's viability to a limited extent.

Results in Table 7.5 suggest that the effect of gender as well as the effect of main institutional and contextual variables remains the same as in Table 7.4, also when controlling for individual level predictors (excluding party-determined viability) of electoral success. Women have a lower likelihood of electoral success in ordered list systems than in closed list voting systems<sup>16</sup>, in countries that employ multiple constituencies, and in societies where the overall levels of gender equality are relatively low. These relationships appear robust because they hold if controlling for individual level variables, too.

The effect of political ambition is, however, somewhat problematic. It is not surprising that candidates who express ambition to become members of the national parliament have a lower likelihood of getting elected to the European Parliament. But similarly to Chapter Five, candidates who wish to become members of the European Parliament also have a lower likelihood of getting elected. I assume that it may be caused by the fact that there is little correlation between political experience and political ambition. Also, the survey item measuring political ambition asks if a candidate wishes to become an MEP sometime during the next ten years. Hence, the variable does not only measure current but also future ambition, which is likely to distort the results.

In line with the hypothesis, women and men who have more political experience, who spend more time on campaigning, and who receive more media coverage have higher likelihood of winning an MEP seat than their contenders who put less effort into their campaign, who are covered less in the news media, and who have less political

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<sup>16</sup> In the case of the models presented in Table 7.5, women in ordered list systems are not statistically significantly less likely to be elected than women in open list systems, when estimating the models with open list voting system being the reference category.

experience. Time spent on campaigning is the only individual level predictor that has a differential impact on women's and men's electoral chances. Results in Table 7.5 suggest that active campaigning increases women's likelihood of winning to a larger extent than men's likelihood of getting elected. This finding may partly explain why women in open list systems have the same likelihood of winning an elected seat as in closed list systems, regardless of the fact that in open list systems women suffer more from the dearth of news media coverage. In other words, female candidates in open list systems may compensate with active campaigning the dearth of news media coverage.

While news media coverage has a weak effect on candidates' electoral success in "All candidates" models, the coefficients fail to reach traditional levels of statistical significance in "Female candidates" and "Male candidates" models. Moreover, the fact that women in general received less news media coverage than men (see Table 6.4, p. 211), but at the same time women are not less likely to be elected than men, further confirms the limited effect individual news media coverage appears to have on candidates' electoral success. I will revisit this finding and elaborate on it in the final conclusion of the thesis.

**Table 7.5: Explaining candidates' electoral success across all PR list systems: logit estimates**

	All candidates	Female candidates		Male candidates		Difference: Chi2
Female	-0.24 (0.42)					
Political experience	1.80 (0.57) **	2.01 (1.03)	+	2.18 (0.84) **		0.01
Political ambition: MEP	-0.65 (0.26) *	-2.30 (1.13)	*	-0.10 (0.35)		2.61
Political ambition: MP	-1.60 (0.59) **	-1.87 (0.96)	+	-1.63 (0.51) **		0.09
Campaign effort: time	0.02 (0.00) **	0.06 (0.01)	**	0.02 (0.01) **		5.86 *
Individual media coverage	0.37 (0.18) *	1.78 (3.05)		0.12 (0.09)		0.30
Preference voting: open list	0.09 (0.19)	-0.32 (0.72)		0.12 (0.38)		0.19
Preference voting: ordered list	-0.26 (0.33)	-1.45 (0.65)	*	0.11 (0.40)		3.96 *
Gender equality	0.83 (2.39)	11.34 (4.68)	*	-3.41 (2.61)		8.75 **
Simple quotas	0.58 (0.46)	1.51 (1.03)		0.28 (0.66)		0.96
Placement quotas	1.17 (0.43) **	0.44 (0.90)		1.35 (0.46) **		0.85
Left / liberal / green party	0.74 (0.44) +	1.12 (0.55)	*	0.61 (0.50)		0.48
Single constituency	0.52 (0.31) +	1.79 (0.95)	+	0.27 (0.44)		1.63
Constant	-3.99 (1.37) **	-12.62 (3.33)	**	-1.29 (1.45)		
N	1528	529		999		
Level 2 N	25	24		25		
Pseudo R2	0.29	0.60		0.23		
Wald Chi2	269.82	287.30		1227.62		
Prob > Chi2	0.00	0.00		0.00		

\*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; +p<0.10; clustered standard errors in parentheses; reference categories: “unpromising” candidate, male candidate.

Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey and Media Content Study

In order to test how candidate's party-determined viability affect her electoral chances I run the main models with candidates from countries that apply ordered and closed list voting systems<sup>17</sup>. Results in Table 7.6 show that candidate viability is a powerful predictor of individual candidate success in ordered list preferential and in closed list non-preferential voting systems. In fact, once controlling for viability, most other individual level predictors of candidate success become insignificant. Moreover, moderate candidate viability (“doubtful candidates”) appears to be a stronger predictor of the likelihood of winning for women than for men.

<sup>17</sup> I omit candidates from open list voting systems due to the fact that party-determined viability indicator measures party's overall viability only in open list systems, while in ordered and closed list systems it includes candidate's electoral list ranking.

Closer examination of the results in Table 7.6 reveals that overall gender equality is no longer a statistically significant predictor of women's likelihood of individual electoral success in ordered and closed list voting systems. Since overall gender equality was a strong predictor of candidate viability, it is likely that gender equality explains the election of women through viable candidacy. Hence, party gatekeepers appear to respond to overall gender ideology more than voters. These results also suggest that voters in less gender equal societies do not discriminate against female candidates more than voters in countries where women and men are in general more equal to one another, when controlling for candidate's individual viability. Furthermore this finding indicates that institutional rules, such as the type of voting system, are stronger predictors of women's electoral success than the overall context in regards to gender equality.

Results in Table 7.6 also show that ordered list preference voting systems seem to hinder women's chances of electoral success. To reiterate, party-determined viability is an especially strong predictor of electoral success for women, as compared to men. Hence, the fact that women suffer from less viable list positions in ordered list preference voting systems may explain why scholars continue to find evidence that women fare better in closed list systems as opposed to preferential voting system.

**Table 7.6: Explaining candidates' electoral success in ordered and closed list systems: logit estimates**

	All candidates	Female candidates		Male candidates		Difference: Chi2
Female	-0.29 (0.41)					
Safe candidate	9.24 (1.19) **	14.15 (4.21) **		9.73 (1.78) **		1.05
Doubtful candidate	3.43 (0.77) **	9.70 (3.03) **		3.25 (0.87) **		4.32 *
Political experience	1.73 (1.05)	2.25 (2.06)		1.87 (1.06) +		0.03
Political ambition: MEP	0.08 (0.61)	0.72 (1.39)		0.04 (0.70)		0.17
Political ambition: MP	-2.27 (0.63) **	-2.56 (2.03)		-3.00 (0.78) **		0.07
Campaign effort: time	0.03 (0.01) **	0.06 (0.02) **		0.02 (0.01) *		3.05 +
Individual media coverage	0.07 (0.06)	0.49 (0.38)		0.03 (0.10)		1.43
Preference voting: ordered list	0.12 (0.48)	-3.03 (1.54) *		0.76 (0.48)		4.93 *
Gender equality	-0.09 (2.90)	3.43 (4.04)		-1.13 (3.67)		0.55
Simple quotas	0.75 (0.60)	0.48 (0.84)		0.85 (0.64)		0.12
Placement quotas	0.55 (0.98)	-1.61 (1.50)		0.87 (1.13)		1.74
Left / liberal / green party	-1.63 (0.70) *	-0.03 (1.05)		-2.00 (0.84) *		2.11
Single constituency	0.19 (0.38)	2.55 (0.99) *		0.04 (0.35)		4.30 *
Constant	-5.33 (2.03) **	-15.90 (4.81) **		-4.32 (2.16) +		
N	1309	445		864		
Level 2 N	20	19		20		
Pseudo R2	0.77	0.90		0.74		
Wald Chi2 (df=3)	20265.05	201.91		313.09		
Prob > Chi2	0.00	0.00		0.00		

\*\*p<0.01; \*p<0.05; +p<0.10; clustered standard errors in parentheses; reference categories: “unpromising” candidate, male candidate.

Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey and Media Content Study

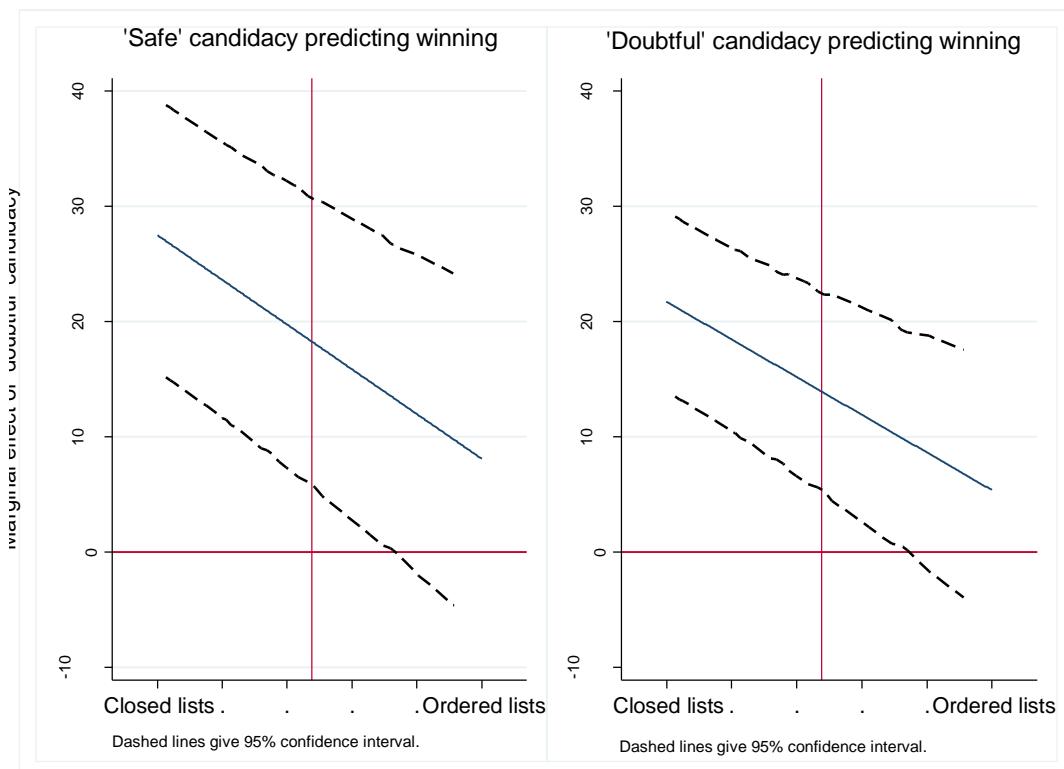
However, in order to have more confidence in the claim that women fare worse in ordered list systems than in closed list systems, because party gatekeepers are more reluctant to place women in viable list rankings in the former systems, I interact the type of voting system with candidates' party-determined viability.

Figure 7.1 depicts the marginal effect of female candidates' party-determined viability on their electoral success across ordered list and closed list voting systems.

Figure 7.1 indicates that both “safe” and “doubtful” candidacy are a stronger predictor of female candidate's likelihood of winning in closed list systems than in ordered list systems. However, the area between the dashed lines at closed list systems coincides

with the area between the dashed lines at ordered list systems. This means that the effect of candidate viability on electoral success is not statistically significantly different across the two types of voting systems. Therefore, party gatekeepers' decisions matter to a similar extent in both systems.

**Figure 7.1: Marginal effect of female candidate's viability on her electoral success by voting system**



Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey and Media Content Study  
Note: Estimates derived from Table 7.6.

However, the fact that the negative coefficient of ordered list voting system for women candidates remains significant also after controlling for candidates' party-determined viability suggests that not only party gatekeepers are responsible for women's lower electoral success likelihood in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems. The data also support the assumption that voters are less likely in ordered list systems than in closed list systems to support female candidates. However, the fact

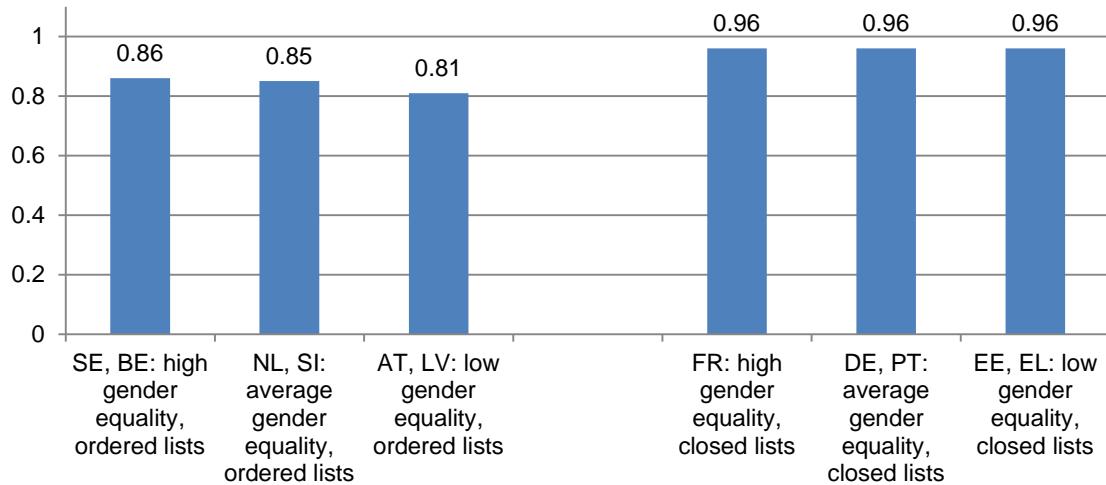
that the type of voting system does not only predict women candidates' likelihood of electoral success indirectly (through candidate's party-determined viability) but also directly does not necessarily suggest a "voter" effect. It is likely that voters in ordered list systems strongly reflect where parties have ranked candidates and therefore elect fewer women than voters in closed list voting systems. Hence, the mechanism of why women fare worse in ordered list systems than in closed list systems is about the party gatekeepers granting women with less viable candidacy and voters largely following the party gatekeepers prior rankings.

The results discussed above illustrate how certain characteristics of the electoral system and the overall context can have a positive or a negative impact on women candidates' likelihood of getting elected. However, the two central variables of interest, the openness of the ballot structure and the overall gender equality in the society do not always go hand-in-hand. There are countries in Europe, that employ closed list ballot structure (favourable to women) but score low in regards to gender equality (unfavourable to women), such as Estonia and Greece; or employ ordered list ballot structure (unfavourable to women) but score high in regards to gender equality (favourable to women), such as Belgium and Sweden. To estimate the full impact of the openness of the ballot structure and the context of overall gender equality, I report predicted probabilities of electoral success for women across a range of situations that correspond to "real world" examples. I used Stata's "CLARIFY" package developed by Tomz et al. (2003) to simulate the results and obtain the predicted probabilities (King et al. 2000).

Figures 7.2 and 7.3 depict how "safe" and "doubtful" female candidates' likelihood of winning an MEP seat varies across voting systems and across countries with different levels of gender equality. Most importantly, Figure 7.2 shows that female candidates' likelihood of winning does not depend on overall gender equality if they are

placed by party gatekeepers as highly viable candidates (“safe” candidates). Also, the type of voting system has little impact on “safe” female candidates’ likelihood of getting elected.

**Figure 7.2: Predicted probabilities of electoral success for “safe” female candidates**



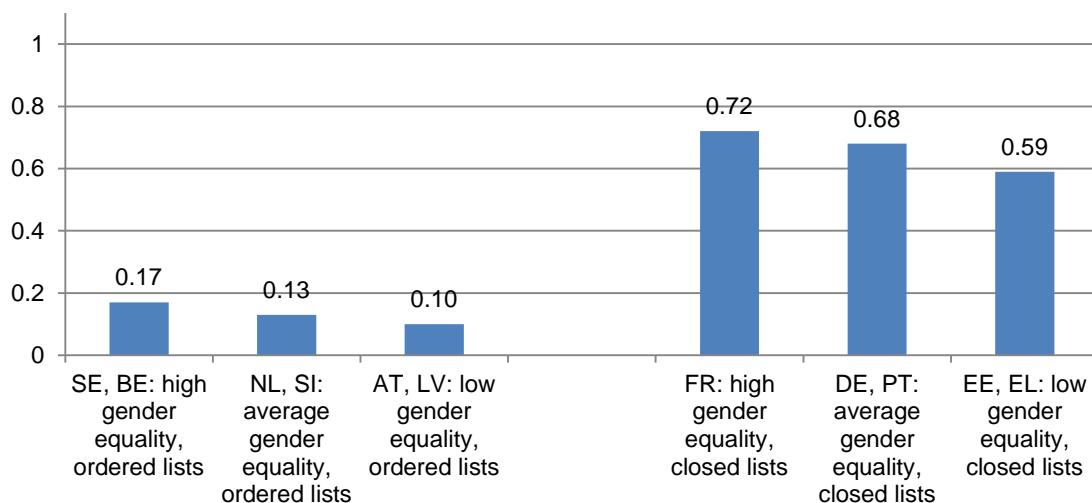
Note: Estimates derived from Column Three in Table 7.6. All other variables are held constant at their mean or mode values in the sample.

Figure 7.3, which depicts the likelihood of “doubtful” female candidates winning the office, tells a slightly different story. Overall gender equality has in general little effect on the probability of getting elected, which is in line with the findings in Table 7.6. However, there are stark differences in women candidates’ probability of winning in ordered and closed list voting systems if party gatekeepers have granted them with moderate viability (“doubtful” candidates). The finding that female candidates in closed list systems have on average more than five times higher likelihood of winning the office than women in ordered list system, if party gatekeepers rank them in “doubtful” electoral list positions, needs highlighting. These results indicate that female candidates who are not ranked on highest list positions in ordered list systems cannot make up their unfavourable starting position with preference votes. It appears

that voters largely follow the party gatekeepers' list rankings in ordered list systems and do not often help women with lower viability to get elected.

Figures 7.2 and 7.3 further suggest that in the context of the European Parliament elections, the difference between voting systems explains more about the election of women than the differences between countries with regards to gender equality. This is well in line with Tripp and Kang's (2008) study which shows that the electoral rules are the single most important predictor of women's descriptive representation in advanced democracies.

**Figure 7.3: Predicted probabilities of electoral success for “doubtful” female candidates**



Note: Estimates derived from Column Three in Table 7.6. All other variables are held constant at their mean or mode values in the sample.

#### 7.4 Final comments

Many scholars report that the likelihood of women's electoral success and descriptive representation are lower in PR list systems that allow preference voting compared to systems that do not (Caul 1999; Htun 2002; Htun 2005; Matland 2005; Norris 1996; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). However, past literature offers little

explanation to why this is the case. Matland (2005) argues that whether preference voting or closed party list voting delivers more equal gender representation depends on whether we believe that it is easier to convince voters or party gatekeepers of the importance of electing women.

Most importantly, this research demonstrates that women do not fare worse than men in all types of preference voting systems. The data from 25 European Union member states show that women have equal likelihood of electoral success in systems where parties decide all (closed list systems) and in systems where parties decide nothing (open list preference voting) in terms of how votes are allocated to seats within a party. However, when this decision is divided between parties and voters (ordered list preference voting) women tend to have lower chances of turning their candidacy into an elected seat. Therefore, to answer Matland's (2005) claim, both party gatekeepers and voters can be equally convinced of the importance of electing women if either of them are the sole decision-makers in determining which individual candidates get elected. However, when the responsibilities of electing women are divided between party gatekeepers and voters, neither of the actors actively support the election of women.

The findings of this Chapter also indicate that voters are not wholly responsible for not voting for female candidates in ordered list systems as often as they do in open list or closed list voting systems. In fact, these data point to the party gatekeepers. The analysis suggests that party-determined viability is a powerful predictor of individual candidate's electoral success in both ordered list and closed list systems. However, the analysis also shows that parties do not only position women in less viable list placements in ordered list systems compared to closed list systems; but less viable ("doubtful") female candidates have lower likelihood of getting elected in ordered list than in closed list systems. Therefore, one of the main reasons why female candidates fare worse in systems that allow preference voting is because party gatekeepers do not

grant women with as viable starting position as they do in closed list systems. Moreover, the data also show that party-determined viability is an especially strong predictor of electoral success for women than for men, which makes these findings even stronger.

While overall gender equality predicts women's chances of election when party-determined viability is not controlled for, it loses the significance of the effect when controlling for party-determined viability in ordered and closed list systems. This is an interesting finding because it suggests that overall gender equality has a greater influence on the way party gatekeepers divide viable candidacy between men and women than it affects voter behaviour. This also indicates that the type of voting system is a stronger predictor of women's individual electoral success than overall levels of gender equality in the society, which is well in line with past findings relying on aggregate level data. To reiterate, Tripp and Kang (2008) found that electoral rules are the single most important predictor of women's descriptive representation in advanced democracies.

In conclusion, this Chapter demonstrates that the unique individual level approach to studying the election of women provides us with a better understanding of not only what affects women's descriptive representation but also why certain mechanisms influence women's electoral chances the way they do.

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## 8 CONCLUSIONS

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This thesis' central aim was to study the election of women at the individual candidate level. By applying the individual level approach, the major goal of the research was to contribute to the wider body of literature on women's descriptive representation by addressing some of the unanswered questions derived from the limited amount of comparative individual level studies. For example, why are there fewer women elected in preferential compared to non-preferential PR list electoral systems? How and why do different types of candidate gender quotas affect the election of women? Or what are the electoral implications of the gender bias in candidates' news media coverage? The individual level approach applied in this thesis allowed me to have a more integrated approach to the study of women candidates' journey along the path from candidates to elected representatives.

Since this thesis relied on the data from the European Parliament elections – second-order elections – it was first necessary to know whether the conventional aggregate level predictors explaining women's descriptive representation in national parliaments also suggested similar effects in the context of the European Parliament

elections (Chapter Four). Fortunately, the data from the 2004 and 2009 European Parliament elections showed that the traditional aggregate level variables explain the election of women in the context of the European Parliament elections the same way as they do in the context of first-order national elections. These findings provided me with confidence that the inferences I would make based on the individual level data from the European Parliament elections would likely be very similar to the results one would obtain from data covering national elections. Furthermore, the aggregate level results in Chapter Four also provided some cues for at which stage of the election certain institutional and contextual variables are likely to affect women's electoral chances the most.

The efforts of combining different sources of individual level data with aggregate level data and studying the broader process of electing women were well rewarded. The analyses in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven showed that individual level variables such as party-determined viability and individual news media visibility, which affect candidate's competitiveness in the electoral process, help to explain why under certain institutional and contextual settings women candidates have lower likelihood of electoral success than under others. I proceed by highlighting how the present individual level research advances our knowledge by explaining the mechanisms of (i) how the type of voting system applied in PR list systems, (ii) the overall levels of gender equality in the society, (iii) the use of candidate gender quotas, and (iv) the gender bias in candidate coverage in the news media affect female candidates' likelihood of electoral success.

*Why do women fare worse in preferential than in non-preferential PR list electoral systems?*

Past research has somewhat struggled to explain why women in non-preferential voting systems have higher levels of descriptive representation than women in preferential PR list voting systems. Richard Matland (2005:104) suggests that the choice between different voting systems depends on “whether we believe it is easier to convince voters to actively vote for women candidates, or to convince party gatekeepers that including more women on the party lists in prominent positions is both fair, and more importantly, strategically wise.”

Research from the UK suggests that party-gatekeepers are likely to understand the strategic benefit of fielding more female candidates. Hayes and McAllister (2001), for example, demonstrate that during the 1997 British general elections Labour sought actively to attract more volatile female support by introducing affirmative candidate selection procedures, and thus doubling the number of elected women MPs. But are party gatekeepers in PR list systems as likely as their colleagues in first-past-the-post systems to actively support the inclusion of more women among highly viable candidates?

First, this thesis demonstrates that a large number of European Union member states do not allow the party gatekeepers or the voters to solely decide the choice of individual representatives. Instead, in many countries party gatekeepers rank order candidates in the electoral lists and then voters can give preference votes and thereby re-order the lists and influence the choice of individual representatives, too.

Therefore, this thesis uncovered a more nuanced trade-off between voters and party gatekeepers. By distinguishing the above mentioned preference voting systems (ordered list system) from purely preferential open list voting systems, this thesis found that not all types of preference voting systems are disadvantageous for the election of

women. In fact, female candidates have the same likelihood of electoral success in open list preferential voting systems as they have in closed list non-preferential voting systems. However, in ordered list preferential voting systems women fare worse. Hence, to respond to Matland's (2005) claim, it is not about whether we trust party-gatekeepers more in promoting the election of women than voters, but it is about the division of decision-making power between the voters and the party-gatekeepers that matters.

Women fare electorally better when either voters or party-gatekeepers "solely" decide the individual legislators elected. However, when both party-gatekeepers and voters can influence the individual legislators elected, women have lower likelihood of being elected because party-gatekeepers in such a situation tend to place women in lower list positions and hence negatively influence voters' decisions in regards to voting for women.

Therefore most importantly, this thesis shows that individual level variables help us to explain why certain institutional designs are disadvantageous for the election of women. The results in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven suggested that the primary reasons why women had lower likelihood of winning in ordered list preferential systems compared to other types of voting systems was because party gatekeepers in ordered list systems supported viable female candidacy less than party gatekeepers in closed list systems. While female candidates in the former systems had the opportunity to make up the less competitive starting position with preference votes, the data did not indicate this kind of outcome. The fact that candidates' party-determined viability was nearly as strong a predictor of individual candidates' electoral success in ordered list systems as in closed list systems, suggested that voters did not significantly re-order the electoral lists with preference votes in ordered list systems. This indicates an interaction effect between candidates' party-determined viability and the type of voting system used for the election of the members of the European Parliament.

### *Why do women fare better in more gender equal societies?*

Another relevant finding concerning why aggregate level variables affect women's electoral chances the way they do is related to the overall levels of gender equality. Thanks to the individual level approach and for studying the election of women in several stages I was (to a certain extent) able to explain whether more women were elected in more gender equal societies because (i) there was a greater pool of qualified female aspirants and candidates to choose from, (ii) the party gatekeepers responded to the perceived demand for (viable) female candidates and fielded women in more viable list positions, (iii) the media responded to the perceived demand to cover more female candidates, and/or (iv) the voters actively voted for women candidates.

The results of the analysis suggested that party gatekeepers responded to the overall levels of gender equality and placed women in more viable list positions in more gender equal societies. Moreover, the effect was the strongest in closed list voting systems and within parties where candidate selection was centralised. I assume that this was the case because in a more centralised party organisation it is likely to be easier for the women's factions in the party (or other interest groups) to hold the party gatekeepers responsible for their illicit decisions when fielding women candidates. The results also showed that the news media responded to overall levels of gender equality, with women receiving more news media coverage in societies where women and men were in general more equal to each other. However, the overall levels of gender equality did not appear to matter during the actual election, once controlling for candidate's party-determined viability. Female candidates in less gender equal societies had the same probability of being elected as their colleagues had in more gender equal societies, when controlling for party-determined viability. This indicated that voters from less gender equal societies did not actively discriminate against female candidates but rather reinforced the decisions of the party gatekeepers.

*Why does candidate gender quota legislation fail to increase women candidates' likelihood of electoral success at the European Parliament elections?*

This thesis also studied how candidate gender quotas affected individual candidates' electoral chances. The results showed that in the context of the European Parliament elections candidate gender quota rules increased the proportion of women among candidates but did not elicit similar effects with regards to viable female candidacy, women's news media coverage, or the actual election of women. The results did not change when I distinguished "simple" quotas from quotas with a placement mandate rule.

I assume that the primary reason for why candidate gender quotas with placement mandate rule did not deliver in the European Parliament elections was because most countries and parties applied the same quota rules for European Parliament elections as they did for national elections. However, the fact that the number of seats divided at the European Parliament elections was considerably lower than the number of seats divided at the national elections could have caused the inefficiency of the quota rules. Furthermore, in many EU member states the placement mandate rule does not require that one sex alternates the other throughout the entire electoral list (zipper system). For example, in the case of Spain, in every five electoral list positions either sex must have constituted at least forty per cent of the candidates. Therefore, an electoral list in which positions one, two, and three were held by men and four and five by women met the placement quota requirement. But since few seats were divided during the European Parliament elections, the given party was likely to gain only three seats, meaning none of the female candidates were viable. As a result, the specific quota designs remained inefficient in increasing women's electoral chances. These results should cause some caution when assuming that the same quota rules at different types of elections deliver the same outcome.

*How does gender bias in candidates' news media coverage affect female candidates' electoral chances?*

While previous research offered a mix record of evidence of the gender bias in candidates' news media coverage during election campaigns, this thesis found that the news media covered female candidates less often than male candidates, also when comparing comparable candidates in terms of their party-determined viability. However, this thesis found less evidence of "significant consequences within electoral process" (Goldenberg and Traugott 1987) due to gender differences in the news media coverage of candidates, as suggested by some scholars (see for example, Goldenberg and Traugott 1987; Graber 1993; Kahn 1994b).

This thesis demonstrated that all else being equal, female candidates were less visible in the news media but not less likely to be elected than men. Hence, the gender bias in news media candidate coverage appeared to have a minimal effect on women's electoral chances. However, it is important to note that the gender bias in candidate coverage is not likely to help to increase women's overall representation either. The less news media cover female candidates compared to male candidates, the less likely party-gatekeepers and voters are to view politics as an equal playground for both men and women. Hence, systematic misrepresentation of women candidates in the news media could lead to party-gatekeepers and voters being less committed to increasing women's descriptive representation.

Also, the limited media effect on electoral outcome could be specific to the European Parliament elections. In many countries, the European Parliament election campaigns are covered in the news media to a limited extent, which could explain, to a certain extent, why gender bias in candidate coverage does not carry over to the Election Day.

## **8.1 Practical implications: the proposals for the electoral reform at the European Parliament level and the results of this thesis**

During the past years, the European Parliament's Committee on Constitutional Affairs (MEP Andrew Duff in particular) has proposed several motions to reform the electoral rules for the election of the members of the European Parliament. In order to demonstrate the practical implications of this research, I discuss in this section how the current ideas for the electoral reform look in the light of the results of this thesis.

The Committee on Constitutional Affairs' (2012) proposal calls for electing 25 MEPs "by a single constituency formed of the whole territory of the European Union; pan-European lists would be composed of candidates drawn from at least one third of the States, and may ensure an adequate gender representation; each elector would be enabled to cast one vote for the EU-wide list in addition to their vote for the national or regional list". In addition, the proposal "calls on States and political parties to promote the better representation of women and minority candidates", and "calls for the opening of a dialogue with the Council, with the participation of the Commission, on the comprehensive amendment of the Act concerning /.../ the voting systems to be used for the pan-European constituency".

In terms of women's descriptive representation, based on the results of this thesis, I do not expect a "soft" call to promote a better representation of women by states and political parties to increase women's descriptive representation in the European Parliament. The results of this thesis suggest that stronger measures, such as legislative and voluntary party quotas, have a limited effect on the election of women. Hence, it is unlikely that the proposed call to promote better representation of women without any specific quota legislation designed exclusively for the election of members of the European Parliament would considerably increase women's representation.

However, the creation of an additional EU-wide constituency is likely to promote the election of women in the European Parliament elections. The results of this thesis suggest that wider constituencies, where party lists are centrally constructed, increase women candidates' likelihood of being elected. At the same time, it is also important that the voting system to be used for the pan-European constituency is beneficial for the election of women. Based on the results of the current thesis, closed list non-preferential voting system would be the best to assure high levels of women's representation.

In addition to the proposed changes listed above, the Committee on Constitutional Affairs could consider extending the dialogue of which voting system to use in the European Parliament elections in all constituencies (not only which voting system to use for the pan-European constituency). The results of this research indicate that the specific electoral rules applied were one of the strongest predictors of women's electoral success. Hence, if the European Parliament is committed to increasing women's descriptive representation, it should consider changing the electoral rules either toward open list preferential or closed list non-preferential voting systems.

## **8.2 Paths for future research**

The fact that individual level variables, most importantly candidate's party-determined viability, are not only important predictors of individual candidates' electoral success but also help us to understand why certain institutional and contextual factors influence the election of women the way they do, reminds us of the importance of individual level cross-national research in the field of women's descriptive representation. However, there could be some caveats to the conclusions. Amongst the possible shortcomings present in the research reported here, the most relevant has to do

with studying second-order elections instead of first-order elections. Also, there are certain issues with the way candidates' news media coverage was measured.

As discussed in the Research Design Chapter, there are also some issues with the overall representativeness of the 2009 European Election Study Candidate Study. While the average response rates were relatively low (24%), the principal investigators of the study, nevertheless, argue that given the comparable response rates to the 1994 Candidate Study by Thomassen, Katz, Norris, and Wessels, the representativeness of the 2009 study is acceptable. Also, the fact that the findings of this research are consistent with the thrust of other work on women's descriptive representation gives further confidence in the 2009 EES Candidate Survey data. If the findings were substantially divergent from past research, the possibility of a major measurement error would be more probable.

Moreover, the only possible alternative data source would have been the data from the Comparative Candidate Study (CCS) project. However, after examining the data, it appeared that the CCS data did not cover enough countries and that the data were not comparable across countries (most variables of interest were missing from more than one CCS country study or asked in a different way). In other words, there were no alternative cross-nationally comparable data available covering elite surveys from a comparable number of countries.

While cross-national data collection is complicated, especially in regards to elite surveys, it would be beneficial to study if the relationships and mechanisms discovered in the current study also hold at national first-order elections. The aggregate level chapter provided confidence that the inferences we make about the election of women in first- and second-order elections are very similar. However, somewhat unconventional findings – with regards to the gender bias in candidate coverage having no effect on women's electoral chances – may need further testing with data from first-

order elections. The efforts of the Comparative Candidate Study's (CCS) group to standardise national candidates' surveys are likely to offer future opportunities for studying women's journey along the path from candidates to representatives at the individual level in the context of national elections, too. However, a major cross-national standardisation of survey items used in the CCS country studies is necessary before any cross-national research can be carried out relying on these data.

While there are certain limitations to how forcefully researchers can invite candidates to participate in surveys and thus increase the response rates and representativeness of candidate surveys, somewhat more feasible solutions could increase the quality of the media content data. For example, future studies could consider making it possible to identify each candidate who received any news media coverage. This way we can advance our knowledge of those who the media cover as well as those who they do not. In addition, we may be also able to advance other research on candidate coverage.

Additionally, it would be interesting to investigate women candidates' electoral chances over time. The current thesis studies the determinants of the election of women at one point in time. However, a more dynamic approach could further advance our knowledge about how different individual and party level variables – next to the conventional aggregate level variables – affect women candidates' likelihood of electoral success. Since individual and party level variables are more likely to vary in time than institutional variables, dynamic approaches are likely to further reveal the mechanisms behind the election of women.

Lastly, while the results of this thesis indicate that party gatekeepers behave differently under different institutional rules, this research could only assume why this is the case and not provide any real explanations. The nature of party gatekeepers' behaviour, with regards to supporting viable female candidates, should be studied

qualitatively. We would want to know how, why, and to what extent their behaviour changes relative to their particular electoral system. Through this, we might come to better understand why women seem to fare better under certain institutional rules.

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## **APPENDICES**

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### **CONTENTS**

**Appendix 1:** Measurement and descriptive statistics of dependent variables

**Appendix 2:** Measurement and descriptive statistics of independent variables

## **Appendix 1: Measurement and descriptive statistics of dependent variables**

This Appendix summarises the measurement of dependent variables used in this thesis by each Chapter. I also report the basic descriptive statistics for all the dependent variables.

### *Chapter 4*

*Women's candidacy:* The percentage women constitute of all MEP candidates in a given member state (2004 and 2009).

*Women's news media visibility:* The percentage of total news media coverage of MEP candidates that is dedicated to female candidates (2004 and 2009 EES Media Content Study).

*Women's descriptive representation:* The percentage women constitute of all elected MEPs (2004 and 2009).

*Women candidates' electoral success rate:* The percentage of women among elected MEPs divided by the percentage of women among candidates (2004 and 2009).

**Table A: Summary of dependent variables used in Chapter 4**

	Mean	Std. deviation	Min	Max	N
Women's candidacy	33.6	8.5	20.0	50.0	50.0
Women's news media visibility	21.6	10.3	4.4	49.4	48.0
Women's descriptive representation	35.0	11.5	0.0	62.0	50.0
Women candidates' electoral success rate	1.1	0.4	0.0	2.0	50.0

*Individual candidate's party-determined viability:* The categorisation of the viability variable is based on candidate's list position in relation to the potential number of seats won by her party (Hix et al. 2009). In order to incorporate uncertainty to the measure, the standard deviation of discrepancy between the predictions and the seats that were actually won was calculated for each country. As a result, candidates with a list position below the predicted seats minus one standard deviation were classified as "safe" candidates. Candidates with a list position above the predicted seats plus one standard deviation were classified as "unpromising" candidates, and all other candidates were classified as "doubtful" (Giebler et al. 2010a). Chapter Five treats candidate's party-determined viability variable as an ordinal variable, where "unpromising" candidate is coded as 1, "doubtful" candidate is coded as 2, and "safe" candidate is coded as 3.

Since this Thesis central aim is to explain the election of women across different types of PR list voting systems, Table B summarises the distribution of party-determined viable candidacy by candidate sex and the type of voting system.

**Table B: Candidate's party-determined viability by candidate sex and the type of voting system (%)**

	Preferential ordered list voting systems			Non-preferential closed list voting systems		
	Unpromising	Doubtful	Safe	Unpromising	Doubtful	Safe
Female candidates	86.8 (n=184)	9.9 (n=21)	3.3 (n=7)	77.3 (n=180)	13.7 (n=32)	9.0 (n=21)
Male candidates	85.8 (n=303)	9.4 (n=33)	4.8 (n=17)	78.4 (n=396)	15.8 (n=80)	5.7 (n=29)
All candidates	86.2 (n=487)	9.6 (n=54)	4.3 (n=24)	78 (n=576)	15.2 (n=112)	6.8 (n=50)

Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey Data

Note: Frequency in parentheses.

## *Chapter 6*

*Amount of individual news media coverage:* The number of times a candidate was mentioned in the news media divided by the total number of times MEP candidates from a given country were mentioned in the news media. However, this indicator could be measured only for candidates who were assigned an individual actor code by the 2009 EES Media Content Study team. Hence, I report both the frequency of having an actor code and the amount of news media coverage candidates with actor code received by candidate sex.

**Table C: Measurement and amount of candidates' individual news media coverage by candidate sex**

	Actor code		Individual news media coverage		
	Percentage	Frequency	Mean	Std. deviation	N
Female candidates	4.6	124	3.5	5.5	124
Male candidates	8.2	404	4.5	9.0	404
All candidates	6.9	528	4.3	8.3	528

Source: 2009 European Parliament elections candidate lists; 2009 EES Media Content Study

## *Chapter 7*

*Candidate's electoral success:* whether a candidate was elected to the European Parliament during the 2009 EP elections or not. Candidates who got elected were coded as 1, and candidates who did not get elected were coded as 0 (2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey data). Since this thesis concentrates on the election of women across different types of PR list voting systems, I report in Table D candidates' electoral success by candidate sex and the type of voting system.

**Table D: Candidates' electoral success by candidate sex and the type of voting system (%)**

	Open lists		Ordered lists		Closed lists	
	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency
Female candidates	9.5	8	7.1	15	15.0	35
Male candidates	16.3	22	9.6	34	10.6	54
All candidates	13.7	30	8.7	49	11.9	89

## **Appendix 2: Measurement and descriptive statistics of independent variables**

This Appendix summarises the measurement of independent and control variables used in the analyses. Since several independent and control variables were used in multiple chapters of the thesis, I list the measurement and descriptive statistics of these variables not by chapter but by the level at which they are measured. Hence, I distinguish between country level, party level, and individual level independent and control variables.

### *Country level independent and control variables*

*Type of voting system:* Member states are classified similarly to Farrel and Scully (2005), with the exception of Poland – which according to its Electoral Law – is an open and not a closed list system (Giebler 2012; Kotnarowski 2012). For the analyses, the following dichotomous variables are used: preferential open list voting system, preferential ordered list voting system, and non-preferential closed list voting system, non-preference closed list voting system being the baseline category. Table E summarises the types of voting systems used for the election of the MEPs and the number of MEPs elected in each EU member state.

**Table E: The type of voting system used and the number of MEPs elected by member state (2009)**

PR list preference voting systems				PR list non-preference voting systems	
Open lists		Ordered lists		Closed lists	
Denmark	13	Austria	17	Estonia	6
Finland	13	Belgium	22	France	72
Italy	72	Bulgaria	17	Germany	99
Luxembourg	6	Cyprus	6	Greece	22
Poland	50	Czech Republic	22	Hungary	22
		Latvia	8	Portugal	22
		Lithuania	12	Romania	33
		Netherlands	25	Spain	50
		Slovakia	13	UK (excl. N.I.)	69
		Slovenia	7		
		Sweden	18		
Total	154		167		395

Source: Farrell and Scully 2005; Giebler 2012.

*Overall levels of gender equality:* An eight category gender equality index, including four major areas of life where equality between men and women varies across Europe is used in this study. I use the following eight indicators to measure the different dimensions of gender equality:

- Equal share of employment: (1) gender gap in employment; (2) gender gap in unemployment.
- Equal share of money: (3) gender pay gap; (4) gender gap in risk of poverty after social transfer.
- Equal share of power: (5) gender gap in national parliament (lower chamber); (6) gender gap in ISCO 1 level occupations.
- Equal share of time: (7) gender gap in hours spent educating children and caring for them among people in full-time employment; (8) gender gap in hours spent cooking and doing house chores among people in full-time employment.

Since the indicators are measured on different scales, the actual values of the indicators are standardised using the min-max methodology in order to calculate the composite index.

The formula is:

$$\text{Standardised value} = \frac{|\text{actual value } x_1| - \text{min value } x_1}{\text{max value } x_1 - \text{min value } x_1},$$

where the actual value is a national score on the indicator (i.e., gender gap of 5% in unemployment); where a situation of absolute equality (no gender gap) refers to the maximum value and has assigned the value 0; and where the minimum value is set at a level which is a little below the actual minimum value within the sample of EU countries. Since gender equality is understood as the absence of gender gaps, both positive and negative gaps are treated the same way which means that the absolute value of the gender gap is used. As a result, the standardised values of each indicator vary between 0 and 1, where 0 corresponds to a situation of the worst inequality in the EU, and 1 corresponds to a situation of absolute equality. The composite index is calculated by summing up the standardised values of all indicators and dividing the sum by the number of indicators. Table F summarises the scores of overall gender equality across EU member states.

**Table F: Overall ranking of 27 EU member states on gender equality index (2007-2009)**

Country	Employment	Unemployment	Pay	Risk of poverty	Political power	Socio-economic power	Care activities	Household activities	Composite index score
Sweden	0.88	0.91	0.42	0.98	0.93	0.49	0.74	0.58	<b>0.74</b>
Finland	0.95	0.81	0.35	0.69	0.8	0.41	0.93	0.67	<b>0.7</b>
Denmark	0.85	0.84	0.43	0.87	0.72	0.25	0.85	0.67	<b>0.68</b>
Belgium	0.67	0.96	0.71	0.72	0.65	0.51	0.7	0.33	<b>0.66</b>
France	0.75	0.91	0.45	0.89	0.25	0.67	0.56	0.5	<b>0.62</b>
Poland	0.61	0.87	0.76	0.91	0.3	0.61	0.48	0.42	<b>0.62</b>
Bulgaria	0.75	0.94	0.6	0.62	0.33	0.49	0.74	0.42	<b>0.61</b>
Hungary	0.67	0.91	0.47	1	0.08	0.61	0.78	0.33	<b>0.61</b>
Romania	0.61	0.73	0.59	0.82	0.09	0.41	0.78	0.83	<b>0.61</b>
Slovenia	0.79	0.99	0.73	0.47	0.14	0.58	0.74	0.42	<b>0.61</b>
Portugal	0.72	0.81	0.73	0.67	0.49	0.46	0.74	0.17	<b>0.6</b>
Luxembourg	0.52	0.8	0.6	0.78	0.37	n.d.	0.56	0.42	<b>0.58</b>
Spain	0.59	0.9	0.45	0.56	0.68	0.49	0.56	0.25	<b>0.56</b>
Latvia	0.99	0.08	0.5	0.38	0.29	0.75	0.78	0.58	<b>0.55</b>
Germany	0.72	0.84	0.26	0.6	0.58	0.65	0.41	0.25	<b>0.54</b>
Netherlands	0.68	0.99	0.24	0.8	0.8	0.36	0.04	0.42	<b>0.54</b>
Italy	0.35	0.64	0.84	0.47	0.32	0.52	0.81	0.17	<b>0.52</b>
Slovakia	0.56	0.8	0.24	0.75	0.28	0.42	0.59	0.33	<b>0.5</b>
UK	0.71	0.69	0.32	0.58	0.28	0.56	0.41	0.42	<b>0.5</b>
Austria	0.69	0.94	0.18	0.51	0.47	0.38	0.33	0.17	<b>0.46</b>
Lithuania	0.96	0.04	0.35	0.18	0.24	0.72	0.59	0.5	<b>0.45</b>
Czech Rep.	0.5	0.74	0.24	0.67	0.19	0.37	0.33	0.42	<b>0.43</b>
Ireland	0.74	0.01	0.45	0.55	0.14	0.48	0.56	0.42	<b>0.42</b>

Country	Employment	Unemployment	Pay	Risk of poverty	Political power	Socio-economic power	Care activities	Household activities	Composite index score
Malta	0.01	0.86	0.75	0.8	0.03	0.07	0.59	0.17	<b>0.41</b>
Estonia	0.97	0.1	0	0.09	0.31	0.61	0.22	0.67	<b>0.37</b>
Cyprus	0.56	0.96	0.25	0.29	0.16	0.03	0.63	0.08	<b>0.37</b>
Greece	0.28	0.1	0.31	0.76	0.17	0.38	0.59	0.08	<b>0.33</b>

Sources: European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions 2009; Eurostat 2009; Eurostat 2007a; Eurostat 2007b; International Labor Organisation 2008; Inter-Parliamentary Union 2008.

*Legislative candidate gender quotas:* Whether legislative candidate gender quotas are applied for the election of MEPs in a given country is measured by relying on the Quota Project's Global Database of Quotas for Women. Candidates running in countries that employ legislative quota rules were coded as 1, and candidates running in countries that do not employ any candidate gender quota legislation were coded as 0. Table G summarises the legislative quotas used for the election of MEPs across EU member states.

**Table G: Legislative candidate quota rules for the election of MEPs<sup>a</sup>**

Country	Legislative quota	Placement mandate rule
Belgium	50% of each gender	Weak: the two top candidates on candidate lists cannot be of the same gender
France	50% of each gender	Strong: strict alternation between men and women throughout the list
Poland	Minimum of 35% of each gender	None
Portugal	Minimum of 33% of each gender	Moderate: the lists cannot have more than two consecutive names of the same sex
Slovenia	Minimum of 40% of each gender	Weak: at least one candidate of each sex figures in the first half of any list
Spain	Minimum of 40% of each gender	Moderate: quotas are not only applied to the whole party lists but also every five posts

Source: Quota Project 2010.

<sup>a</sup> EU member states missing from the Table employ no legislative candidate gender quotas.

*Strength of left-wing / liberal/ ecological ideology:* The proportion of seats won by national parties that have affiliation with the Social Democrats (PES), Liberals and Liberal Democrats (ALDE), Greens and Regionalists (G-EFA), or Communists, Democratic Socialists and the far Left European Parliamentary party groups. Table H shows the average strength of left-wing, liberal, and ecological ideology during the 2004 and 2009 European Parliament elections.

**Table H: Strength of left-wing / liberal / ecological ideology at the European Parliament elections**

	Mean	Std. deviation	Min	Max	N
2004	51.5	15.8	21	78	23
2009	46.9	14.74	14	77	25
Total	49.1	15.3	14	78	48

*Women's aggregate political experience:* proportion of women in national parliaments in each EU member state that employs PR list electoral system. Table I summarises the descriptive statistics of women's aggregate political experience during the 2004 and 2009 European Parliament Elections.

**Table I: Women's aggregate political experience (% women in national parliaments) at the European Parliament elections**

	Mean	Std. deviation	Min	Max	N
2004	22.5	10.9	9.8	45.3	25
2009	24.6	10.2	11.1	46.4	25
Total	23.6	10.6	9.8	46.4	50

*District magnitude:* number of MEP seats per country or a dichotomous variable measuring whether the country constitutes a single constituency or multiple constituencies. To reiterate, see Table E for the number of MEP seats per country. When district magnitude is measured by the number of constituencies in the country, candidates running in member states with a single constituency were coded as 1 and candidates running in countries with multiple constituencies were coded as 0. Only candidates from Belgium, France, Italy, Poland, and the United Kingdom were assigned a 0 for single constituency district magnitude measure, as all other member states that employ PR list electoral system constitute a single constituency.

### *Party level independent and control variables*

*Voluntary party quotas:* Whether voluntary party quotas are applied for the election of MEPs in a given party is measured by relying on the Quota Project's Global Database of Quotas for Women (2010). Candidates running for parties that employ voluntary candidate gender quota rules were coded as 1, and candidates running for parties that do not employ any quotas were coded as 0. Table J summarises the voluntary party quotas used for the election of MEPs.

*Simple quotas:* legislative and voluntary party quotas which do not specify a placement mandate rule.

*Quotas with placement mandate rule:* legislative and voluntary party quotas which specify the list placement of women in electoral lists.

The right-hand “Placement mandate” columns in Tables G and J specify the placement mandate rule. Candidates running for parties or in countries without placement mandate rule were coded 1 for “simple quota”, candidates running for parties or in countries with placement mandate rule were coded 1 for “quotas with placement mandate”, and candidates running for parties or in countries that do not appear in Tables G and J were coded 0 for both “simple quota” and “quotas with placement mandate”.

**Table J: Voluntary party quota rules for the election of MEPs**

Country <sup>a</sup>	Party	Voluntary party quota	Placement mandate rule
Austria	The Greens-Green Alternative (GA)	50% of each gender	None
Austria	Austrian People's Party (ÖVP)	Minimum of 33% of each gender	None
Austria	Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ)	Minimum of 40% of each gender	None
Cyprus	Movement of Social Democrats (KISOS)	Minimum of 30% of each gender	None
Czech Rep.	Social Democrats (ČSSD)	Minimum of 25% of each gender	Moderate: 25 percentage women among party's top candidates
France	Socialist Party (PS)	50% of each gender	None
Germany	Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD)	Minimum of 40% of each gender.	Strong: lists should be zipped, with the option of allocating every fifth place to someone of either sex
Germany	The Left Party	50% of each gender	Strong: the first two and then every other place are reserved for women
Germany	Alliance 90/The Greens	50% of each gender	None
Germany	Christian Democratic Union (CDU)	Minimum of 33% of each gender	None
Greece	Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK)	Minimum of 40% of each gender	None
Hungary	Hungarian Socialist Party (MSzP)	Minimum of 20% of each gender	None
Hungary	Politics Can Be Different (LMP)	Minimum of 33% of each gender	Moderate: the lists cannot have more than two consecutive names of the same sex
Italy	Democratic Party (PD)	50% of each gender	Strong: alternation between men and women throughout the list
Lithuania	Social Democratic Party (LSDP)	Minimum of 33% of each gender	None
Luxembourg	Christian Social People's Party (CSV)	Minimum of 33% of each gender (target)	None
Luxembourg	The Left	50% of each gender	None
Luxembourg	The Green Party	50% of each gender (target)	None
Netherlands	Labour Party (PvdA)	50% of each gender	Strong: alternation between men and women throughout the list

Country <sup>a</sup>	Party	Voluntary party quota	Placement mandate rule
Netherlands	Green Left (GL)	Percentage not confirmed	None
Romania	Democratic Party (PD)	Minimum of 30% of each gender	None
Romania	Social Democratic Party (PSD)	Minimum of 30% of each gender	None
Slovakia	People's Party - Movement for Democratic Slovakia (HZDS)	50% of each gender (target)	None
Sweden	Social Democratic Party (S)	50% of each gender	Strong: alternation between men and women throughout the list
Sweden	Left Party (V)	50% of each gender	None
Sweden	Green Party (MP)	50% of each gender, plus minus one person	None
Sweden	Moderate Party (M)	Percentage not confirmed	Two women and two men shall be placed on the top four positions on the party list
UK <sup>b</sup>	Labour Party	50% of each gender	Strong: alternation between men and women throughout the list

Source: Quota Project 2010.

<sup>a</sup> Countries in which (e.g. Slovenia and Spain) voluntary party quota requirements do not exceed legislative quota requirements are excluded from this table.

<sup>b</sup> Liberal Democrats did not apply any hard quotas in the 2009 European Parliament election but the party has used quota rule in European Parliament elections before.

*Centralisation of candidate selection:* 2009 EES Candidate Survey question “On which level were you nominated as an official candidate for the EP election?” was used. Candidates nominated at the local level were coded as 1, candidates nominated at the regional level were coded as 2, and candidates nominated at the national level were coded as 3. Table K shows the level of candidate nomination by candidate sex and the type of voting system.

**Table K: Centralisation of candidate selection by candidate sex and type of voting system**

	Local level	Regional level	National level
Female candidate	8.3 (n=29)	34.1 (n=119)	57.6 (n=201)
Male candidate	7.3 (n=53)	36.0 (n=260)	56.7 (n=410)
Ordered list systems	6.7 (n=30)	21.1 (n=94)	72.1 (n=321)
Closed list systems	8.3 (n=52)	45.5 (n=285)	46.3 (n=290)
All candidates	7.7 (n=82)	35.3 (n=379)	57.0 (n=611)

Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey Data

Note: Frequency in parentheses.

*Inclusiveness of the selectorate:* 2009 EES candidate Survey question “On this level, who has officially nominated you to run in the European Parliament elections?” was used. I utilised the original categories of the 2009 EES Candidate Survey, ranging from exclusive to inclusive candidate selectorate: “the executive board of your party” (1), “appointed party members” (2), “elected party members (delegates)” (3), “all party members” (4), and “voters” (5). Table L summarises the inclusiveness of candidate selection by candidate sex and by the type of voting system.

**Table L: Inclusiveness of the selectorate by candidate sex and type of voting system**

	Party's executive board	Appointed party members	Elected party members (delegates)	All party members	Voters
Female candidate	40.8 (n=141)	13.9 (n=48)	22.0 (n=76)	22.2 (n=77)	1.2 (n=4)
Male candidate	43.5 (n=312)	14.6 (n=105)	22.3 (n=160)	16.7 (n=120)	2.9 (n=21)
Ordered list systems	49.3 (n=217)	16.8 (n=74)	19.6 (n=86)	13.2 (n=58)	1.1 (n=5)
Closed list systems	37.8 (n=236)	12.7 (n=79)	24.0 (n=150)	22.3 (n=139)	3.2 (n=20)
All candidates	42.6 (n=453)	14.4 (n=153)	22.2 (n=236)	18.5 (n=197)	2.4 (n=25)

Source: 2009 European Election Study Candidate Survey Data

Note: Frequency in parentheses.

*Party viability:* The electoral standing of candidate's party is operationalised by the share of votes the party received in the past national elections prior to 2009 EP election and a dichotomous variable is used in the analysis (1 = party received more than 10% of the vote, 0 = party received less than 10% of the vote). Table M summarises party viability by candidate sex.

**Table M: Party viability by candidate sex**

	Viable party	Not viable party
Female candidates	33.2 (n=904)	66.8 (n=1820)
Male candidates	32.4 (n=1591)	67.6 (n=3320)
All candidates	32.7 (n=2503)	67.3 (n=5159)

Source: 2009 European Parliament elections candidate lists.

Note: Frequency in parentheses.

#### *Individual level independent and control variables*

*Female candidate:* throughout the thesis, female candidates were coded as 1 and male candidates were coded as 0. Since the thesis utilised a number of different data sources for individual level analyses, Table N shows the gender distribution of candidates in the different data sources.

**Table N: Candidate gender distribution in different data sources**

	2009 EES Candidate Survey	2009 EES Media Content Study (actors)	2009 EP elections candidate lists
Female candidates	34.6 (n=529)	23.5 (n=124)	35.7 (n=2724)
Male candidates	65.4 (n=999)	76.5 (n=404)	64.3 (n=4911)

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey data; 2009 EES Media Content Study data; European Parliament elections candidate lists.

Note: Frequency in parentheses.

*Individual candidate's party-determined viability:* candidate's electoral list placement determined by her party / candidate's electoral list placement by her party in

conjunction with her party's overall electoral standing. In Chapter Six candidate's party-determined viability is measured by her standardised electoral list placement. The standardised list position for each candidate is calculated based on the following formula:

$$\text{Std. list position} = \frac{\text{candidate list position} - \text{mean list position of candidates in the party list}}{\text{standard deviation of the mean list position of candidates in the party list}}$$

Hence, the standardised list position represents the distance between candidate's list position and all her party's candidates' mean in units of the standard deviation. The standardised list position has a negative value when the raw list position is below the mean and a positive value when above. Table O summarises candidate's party-determined viability (measured by standardised list position) by candidate sex and the type of voting system. In order to recall the measurement and descriptive statistics for candidate party-determined viability measure used in Chapter 7, see Section Chapter 5 in Appendix 1.

**Table O: Candidates' standardised list positions by candidate sex and the type of voting system**

		Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	N
Ordered lists	Female candidates	0.01	0.97	-1.55	2.59	802
	Male candidates	-0.01	1.01	-1.55	2.58	1327
	All candidates	0.00	1.00	-1.55	2.59	2144
Closed lists	Female candidates	-0.01	0.97	-1.61	2.94	1287
	Male candidates	0.01	1.02	-1.61	3.03	1972
	All candidates	0.00	1.00	-1.61	3.03	3269
Ordered and closed lists	All candidates	0.00	1.00	-1.61	3.03	5413

Source: 2009 European Parliament elections candidate lists.

*Candidate's political experience:* either measured by an index summarising candidate's experience in party office and in different elected positions or by incumbency in the European Parliament.

For the political experience index 2009 EES Candidate Survey question was used: “Can you tell us about your political experience? Are you now or have you ever been a member of any of the following bodies? Local representative body; Regional representative body; National representative body; Member of the European Parliament; Member of local government; Member of regional government; Member of national government”. For each of the variables each respondent was assigned a value “1” (if she is or has been a member) and “0” (if she was never a member). The political experience index is measured as the proportion of memberships in relation to the total number of items (for more information, see Giebler et al. 2010).

When political experience was measured by incumbency in the European Parliament (e.g. in Chapter Six), candidates who were incumbent office holders were coded as 1 and candidates who were not incumbents were coded as 0. Table P summarises the descriptive statistics of political experience index and incumbency by candidate sex.

**Table P: Candidates’ political experience by candidate sex**

	Political experience index					EP incumbency	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max	N	Percentage	Frequency
Female candidates	0.16	0.19	0	1	529	6.1	165
Male candidates	0.16	0.19	0	1	999	6.7	330
All candidates	0.16	0.19	0	1	1528	6.5	495

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey data; 2009 European Parliament elections candidate lists.

*Political ambition:* 2009 EES Candidate Survey question “What would you like to be ten years from now on? Please tick as many boxes as appropriate” was used. Ambition for positions in the European Parliament = 1, if a candidate responded that “in 10 years from now I’d like to be” (a) a member of the European Parliament; (b) chair of

my party group in the EP; and/or (c) chair of an EP committee. Ambition for positions in national parliament = 1, if a candidate responded that “in 10 years from now I’d like to be” (a) a member of national parliament; (b) a chair of parliamentary group; and/or (c) a chair of parliamentary committee. Table Q summarises 2009 MEP candidates’ political ambitions by candidate sex.

**Table Q: Candidates’ ambition for European Parliament and for national parliaments by candidate sex**

	European Parliament ambition		National parliament ambition	
	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency
Female candidates	41.6	220	34.4	182
Male candidates	39.1	391	34.9	349
All candidates	39.9	611	34.8	531

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey data.

*Campaign effort, time spent campaigning:* 2009 EES Candidate Survey question “About how much time do you devote to campaigning per week during the last month before the election? (in hours)” was used. Table R summarises the time spent on campaigning by candidate sex and the type of voting system.

**Table R: Campaign effort: time spent (h/w) on campaign by candidate sex and the type of voting system**

	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max	N
Female candidates	30.60	27.90	0	150	529
Male candidates	31.03	28.33	0	150	999
Open list systems	38.68	32.27	0	140	219
Ordered list systems	28.42	27.38	0	150	565
Closed list systems	30.47	27.06	0	150	744
All candidates	30.89	28.16	0	150	1528

Source: 2009 EES Candidate Survey data.

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