The Receptiveness of Political Parties towards Women

Understanding the Impact of Candidate Selection Procedures

by

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Declaration

I, undersigned Burtejin Zorigt hereby declare that this dissertation contains no materials accepted for any other degrees, in any other institutions. The dissertation contains no materials previously written and/or published by any other person, except where appropriate acknowledgment is made in the form of bibliographical reference.

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Abstract

This dissertation argues that conventional explanations about the impact of electoral systems or culture on women's underrepresentation in politics, not only fail to account for all observed variation in the explanandum, but do not leave enough space for policy interventions either. The reason behind this is that institutional changes, for example, in the electoral system, are rare and may be politically costly to many powerful actors, while changing political culture takes a long time. In contrast, revising and changing the political parties, and in particular, their candidate selection procedure, is not a hopeless undertaking, as political parties are goal-oriented organizations and an improved women's representation is often in line with their ideology or political goals. The main argument here, therefore, is that the role of political parties needs to be examined if a stronger representation of women in parliament is deemed desirable. The dissertation relies on mixed-method research, featuring semi-structured interviews, surveys, document analysis, and quantitative data analysis. The analysis is based on a cross-national and cross-party dataset on the one hand, and a Hungarian case study on the other. I analyze the candidate selection procedure from three perspectives: centralization, inclusiveness, and institutionalization. The reason why I focused on these variables is that they are general and can be applied to any selection procedure. On addition, they allow placing parties along a continuum of variables, comparing different parties and countries, and tracking and measuring changes over time in the candidate selection procedure. The results show that although the candidate selection procedure may at first appear to be gender-neutral, its impact on women and men candidates is different. Parties with inclusive, decentralized, and institutionalized candidate selection procedures have more women candidates than parties with exclusive, centralized, and non-institutionalized candidate selection procedures. I also test this result under real-life circumstances in Hungary, where I examine the effect of party primaries on women's political representation. The results confirm that primaries, as an example of a decentralized, inclusive, and institutionalized candidate selection procedure, do not bring an immediate breakthrough for women's political representation. Still, they seem to be more beneficial in this respect than candidate selection without open primaries. The dissertation also demonstrates a significant gap between the formal structure of parties and how candidate selection takes place in practice. The interviews' results suggest that the parties function in a more informal manner that is less inclusive of women and thus disadvantages them in the candidate selection procedure. In line with feminist institutionalism, the thesis supports the claim that parties should be treated as gendered institutions.

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List of Abbreviations

DK – Demokratikus Koalíció (Democratic Coalition)

Együtt – a Korszakváltók Pártja (Together – Party for a New Era)

FIDESZ – Fidesz - Magyar Polgári Szövetség (Fidesz - Hungarian Civic Alliance)

Jobbik – Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom (Jobbik, the Movement for a Better Hungary)

Momentum – Momentum Mozgalom (Momentum Movement)

MSZP – Magyar Szocialista Párt (Hungarian Socialist Party)

MP – Member of Parliament

NGO – Non-governmental organizations

LMP – Lehet Más a Politika! (Politics Can Be Different!)

P – Párbeszéd (Dialogue)

PR system – Proportional Representation System

SMD – Single-Member District

SMD candidate – Single-Member District Candidate

"The nomination stage eliminates 99.96 percent of all the eligible people. The voters choose from only 0.04 percent."
(Pesonen 1968: 348)

1 Introduction

Most countries in the world are democracies, where, in theory, anyone can form and join organizations, where there are free and fair elections, and anyone can stand for election. However, some social groups have unequal access to political representation (Chiva 2005). In particular, women are notoriously underrepresented in politics; only 24.5 percent of all national parliamentarians worldwide are women (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019). At the same time, in most countries around the world, the proportion of women in parliament is steadily rising, and in an increasing number of countries female leaders are elected as prime ministers and presidents. Nevertheless, there is one European country where, for some reason, this change is not happening. That country is Hungary, where women's representation in parliament has been chronically low and has remained stagnant at around 10 percent in the last 32 years since the regime change. In contrast, election data show a steady increase in the proportion of women candidates. This suggests that the problem is not on the "supply" side but in demand for female candidates, preserving the status quo of low numbers of women in politics.

Previous studies have noted that there are mainly three types of explanations for women's political underrepresentation: institutional, e.g., a majoritarian electoral system is less favorable to women's political representation than a proportional electoral system (Fortin-Rittberger and Rittberger 2014; Ilonszki 2012; Matland 1995; Matland and Studlar 1996; McAllister and Studlar 2002; Moser 2001; Norris 1996; Rule 1987; Sawer 1997); socio-economic and cultural, such as the lack of political ambition among women or biases against women's participation in politics (Bjarnegård and Kenny 2015; Caul 2001; Clark 2017; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Kittilson 2006; Norris and Inglehart 2001); and organizational barriers, e.g., political parties (Baer 1993; Caul 2001; Davidson-Schmich 2006; Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Lovenduski 2005; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). In addition, many other social, economic, and cultural factors influence the representation of women in legislatures, such as the strength of women's movements or the socio-economic status of women in a given country (Moser 2001). Moreover, these factors often interact and reinforce their effects on women's representation in parliament. I find that that conventional

explanations about the impact of electoral systems or culture on women's underrepresentation in politics, not only fail to account for all observed variation in the explanandum, but do not leave enough space for policy interventions either. The reason behind this is that institutional changes, for example, in the electoral system, are rare and may be politically costly to many powerful actors, while changing political culture takes a long time. For example, there is little evidence that electoral systems have been specifically changed to increase women's political representation.

In contrast, revising and changing the political parties, and in particular, their candidate selection procedure, is not a hopeless undertaking, as political parties are goal-oriented organizations. It is also often in line with their ideology or political interests to support women's political representation. My main argument is that through political parties a stronger political representation of women is more likely to be achieved in a shorter timeframe. Therefore, this dissertation aims to understand better how a specific function of political parties, namely the candidate selection procedure, affects the representation of women in the legislature.

While it has long been known that the nomination for elected office is an essential step in women's political representation (Hinojosa 2012; Norris 1996, 1997), scholars have just recently begun investigating the gendered dynamics of party organizations. More specifically, how parties select their candidates and the impact of recruitment methods on women's representation in parliament. One of the reasons for this may well be that while the political science literature on candidate selection was less focused on gender, the researchers in gender studies did not initially consider candidate selection to be such a crucial factor in women's political representation. In this thesis, however, I combine these two separate bodies of literature and their principles and theories. Thus, the candidate selection procedure of political parties is not only an area that has not yet been empirically explored, but it is also an interesting variable enabling policy invention. An implicit goal of this dissertation is to contribute to a stronger political representation of women, which is particularly needed in countries like Hungary, where the proportion of women in politics is chronically low. Equal representation of women and men in politics is a fundamental requirement of democracy, leading not only to greater social equality, more inclusive governance, and higher living standards but also to positive impacts on education, health, and infrastructure development. Therefore, the main question in this dissertation is, which forms of candidate selection procedures could lead to a lower or higher representation of women?

Political parties' selection and nomination procedures for elections are particularly challenging to study because it is an intra-organizational procedure characterized by several formal rules and informal practices, e.g., secret deals. The candidate selection procedure is the private affair of the parties, even if there are legal regulations (Epstein 1967). However, it is rarely regulated by law (Czudonowski 1975), leaving the creation of rules in the parties' grasp. Gallagher and Marsh (1988) defined *candidate selection* of political parties as the secret garden of politics because of the dearth of scientific knowledge about candidate selection and because there is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the selection procedure hidden from the public. Due to the private nature of this procedure, almost three decades after their study, there is little known about the mechanisms that drive political parties' selection procedure.

Nevertheless, it is often argued that parties act as "difficult gatekeepers" in the way of female candidates and they put obstacles for women to enter the political realm (Cheng and Tavits 2011; Kenny 2013; Kittilson 2006; Murray 2010), as we look at the recruitment, retention, or promotion of female politicians (Lovenduski 2005). More recently, scholars of feminist institutionalism have argued that political parties are gendered institutions, meaning that they operate according to gender norms and that their formal and informal rules affect women's political representation (Bjarnegård 2013; Bjarnegård and Kenny 2016; Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2016, 2017; Johnson 2016; Kenny 2013; Kenny and Verge 2013, 2016). Therefore, I argue that formal rules and informal practices should be studied together to see how the "rules in form" (de jure rules) and "rules in use" (de facto rules) interact with each other (Bjarnegård and Kenny 2015). Yet most of the existing studies on candidate selection and women's representation focus either on informal aspects (see e.g., Piscopo (2016) on Mexico, Johnson (2016) in Uruguay, Verge and Espírito-Santo (2016) on Portugal and Spain, Bjarnegård and Kenny (2016) on Thailand and Scotland, or on formal aspects (e.g. Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2016, 2017; Pruysers et al. 2017). One exception is a new study by Kelbel (2020) on European elections, which examines both the formal and informal dimensions of party nomination. This study argues that, while informal processes are less inclusive, parties do not rely on informality in their day-to-day functioning.

To give a more holistic view, this dissertation, uses a mixed-method design to simultaneously examine the formal rules and informal practices of candidate selection procedures. On the one hand, I study the formal rules of political parties and the recruitment procedures by analyzing official party documents and conducting quantitative analyses of

datasets. On the other hand, I study informal practices through interviewing and surveying actors involved in the candidate selection procedure. I expect that informal rules in candidate selection just as well as in other spheres of life may contradict or undermine formal rules and, at the same time, can enable or constrain particular political behavior and outcomes (Bjarnegård 2013; Grzymala-Busse 2010; Waylen 2014). According to Helmke and Levitsky (2004), informal practices and norms shape formal institutional outcomes by creating or strengthening incentives to comply with formal rules. Many political parties have detailed rules but do not necessarily guarantee that the recruitment procedure will mirror these party regulations. For instance, the literature on gender quotas provides numerous examples of countries and parties that fail to meet the formal targets for the selection and election of female candidates (Bjarnegård and Kenny 2015). This is because compliance with the voluntary quotas is entirely up to the parties. However, the legal quota provisions are not always observed as the larger parties can afford to pay the fine. In these cases, the implementation and enforcement of gender quotas depend on the willingness of the political parties, which in turn is constrained by such factors that are yet little known or documented.

Understanding the reasons for women's political underrepresentation is essential because it has profound consequences for democracy, public life, and public policy. On the one hand, women's greater representation may potentially increase women's participation in politics in general as female politicians can mobilize women activists inside and outside parties (Mansbridge 1999; Phillips 1995). Previous studies suggest that female politicians are more likely to recruit female party activists and women's ground campaigns are more likely to contact female voters (High-Pippert and Comer 1998; Kittilson and Schwindt-Bayer 2010; Lawless 2004). Therefore, women's political representation has different impacts on engaging more women in politics, building women's party groups, and putting 'women's issues' on party manifestos. Some studies suggest a relationship between women's numeric and substantive representation (Celis 2006; Jones 2014; Wängnerud 2009). On the other hand, one way to measure democratic legitimacy is how well women and other minorities are represented within democratic institutions. Therefore women's political representation could also affect citizens' satisfaction with democracy (Moser 2001).

To situate the topic of this dissertation, in *Section 1.1*, I first briefly review the literature on women's political representation and the candidate selection procedure and explain the relationship between the two. In parallel, I also review the literature on parties' organizational features and procedures through a gender lens and point out their shortcomings. *Section 1.2*

introduces the puzzle and the main research question of the dissertation. In *Section 1.3,* I present the research agenda and methods. Finally, the structure of the dissertation is introduced in *Section 1.4.*

1.1 Literature Review and Contribution

A significant body of literature examines the possible determinants of women's political representation. Early studies focusing on Western countries have argued that women's representation in legislatures can be explained by the combination of institutional/political, cultural, and socio-economic factors (Inglehart and Norris 2003; Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Matland 1993; Matland and Studlar 1996; Rule 1987; Tremblay 2007). Among institutional factors, many studies argued that proportional electoral systems are more favorable for women than majoritarian systems, parties with leftist ideology nominate female candidates in higher numbers than conservative parties, and gender quotas also enhance women's representation in politics (Caul 1999; McAllister and Studlar 2002; Norris 1985, 1997a; Opello 2006; Rule 1987; Sawer 1997).

Another branch of the literature suggests that political parties play a crucial role in understanding women's presence in legislatures (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Lovenduski 2005). Previous research (e.g., Kenny 2013; Kittilson 2006; Lovenduski 2005) suggests that political parties, especially their candidate selection procedures, are crucial to understanding male overrepresentation and female underrepresentation in politics. Parties differ in the number of female candidates, in how they place women on party lists, and in the proportion of women they send to parliaments (Caul 1999). Early research heavily relied on the model of 'supply and demand' by Pippa Norris (1997b) to understand the dynamics of candidate selection on women's descriptive representation. The model proposes that the number of women elected is the combined result of (1) the supply of the qualifications of women as a group to run for political office and (2) the demand (desire or willingness) of party gatekeepers to select female aspirants.

The demand for female candidates from party selectors might not be vital for two reasons. First, because of prevailing gender-role norms that consider female politicians less capable than men (Galligan and Clavero 2008). Alternatively, Montgomery and Ilonszki (2003) argue that they might think women will lose votes for the party. Bjarnegård and Kenny (2016) argue that male selectors prefer men because male candidates are members of the insider group, typically composed of men. They perceive women as outsiders to the party and as less trustworthy people with fewer networks. Cheng and Tavits (2011) note that female

candidates have better chances of getting nominated when the gatekeeper is a woman rather than a man. Their findings suggest that both male and female party gatekeepers may not just prefer but support and promote the nomination of candidates from their gender.

Under cultural factors, religion and traditional views of gender roles in society are often mentioned as important regarding women's representation (Diaz 2005; Inglehart and Norris 2003; Norris and Inglehart 2001; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). Other explanations include that women are less ambitious in their political careers and that voters, including the female electorate, favor male politicians or that both the media and the electorate have higher expectations of female politicians than male politicians (e.g., Fox and Lawless 2014; Kanthak and Woon 2015; Piscopo 2018; Rule 1981). However, the well-known argument that voters discriminate based on gender and that they are biased against female candidates was rejected several times, and most studies argue that not the voters but the party selectors are biased towards female candidates (Anzia and Berry 2011; J. H. Black and Erickson 2003; Dolan and Lynch 2016; Dowling and Miller 2015; Pruysers et al. 2017; Sanbonmatsu 2006). However, these studies also suggest that party leaders might still believe that the electorate would not vote for women, and that is why they prefer male candidates who seem like safer candidates. Among socio-economic factors, scholars have discussed that there is a positive relationship between women's proportion in parliaments and the labor market participation of women, the educational level of women, a high score on the Human Development Index, the post-industrial society, and the developed welfare state (Matland 1998; Moore and Shackman 1996; Oakes and Almquist 1993; Rule 1981; Siaroff 2000).

Studies looking at Central-Eastern Europe and the post-socialist countries have found that cultural explanations, especially the lack of feminist movements, the existence of traditional gender stereotypes in society, such as that women are less qualified than men for leadership positions, and women's double burden are the most important factors in explaining women's low political representation in the region (Einhorn and Sever 2003; Galligan and Clavero 2008; Galligan, Clavero, and Calloni 2008; Marody 1993; Matland and Montgomery 2003; Montgomery and Ilonszki 2003). Wilcox, Stark and Thomas (2003) indeed argue that patriarchal attitudes about women and their societal roles can influence the gender distribution of political power in Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, the communist era's apparent aspirations for equality provoked a backlash against any gender quota regulation in the region (Matland and Montgomery 2003). However, another study suggests that it is essential to focus on the interaction of two variables: the persistence of

significant structural barriers and the sustained efforts made by women's advocates if one wants to understand women's political representation in Central-Eastern Europe after the collapse of state socialism (Wolchik and Chiva 2021).

More recent literature, however, mentions two distinct reasons for the low political representation of women. The US-focused literature suggests that male dominance in politics is due to women's lack of political ambition (Fox and Lawless 2004, 2005, 2014; Fox, Lawless, and Feeley 2001; Lawless 2015; Lawless and Pearson 2008). Nevertheless, feminist institutionalism literature has again emphasized the role of political parties and their candidate selection procedures in women's political representation. According to Krook and Mackay (2011), *feminist institutionalism* integrates feminist and new institutionalism approaches to analyze gendered institutions. Thus, feminist institutionalism focuses on how institutions are gendered and how formal and informal rules are at play which affect political behaviors and outcomes (Kenny 2014; Mackay, Kenny, and Chappell 2010). According to Helmke and Levitsky (2004, 727), *institutions* are defined as rules and procedures that structure social interaction by constraining and enabling actors' behavior. On the other hand, gendered institutions mean that constructions of masculinity and femininity are intertwined in the daily culture of the institutions. However, the masculine ideal dominates institutional structures, practices, discourses, and norms (Krook and Mackay 2011, 6). According to Mackay (2011), gendered institutions are crucial for understanding how gender norms operate and how gender power dynamics and inequalities are constructed and maintained within an organization.

In this dissertation, there is a strong emphasis on political parties and their candidate selection procedures; thus, feminist institutionalism and this project are linked. The starting point of feminist institutionalism is that parties are institutions, and one way of understanding gender inequalities within political parties is to analyze the gendered and institutional dimensions of candidate selection procedures. According to feminist institutionalism, political parties are not only institutions but also gendered institutions. It implies that parties are characterized by traditional conceptions of gender relations that provide unequal opportunity structures for women and men. Moreover, it often disadvantages women and advantages men. From the perspective of this dissertation, the critical point is that the party body that selects candidates is often a group of men. It does not mean that men always disadvantage women, but previous research indicates that it is frequently the case, even if unintentionally.

For this reason, it is vital to take a closer look at the parties' candidate selection procedures. To understand the importance of parties' candidate selection procedures on women's representation, one should think of electoral rules as the means of distributing seats among parties and of candidate selection as the primary determinant of intra-party mandate allocation (Atmor, Hazan, and Rahat 2011, 32). To be elected to parliament, someone must be selected as a candidate for a specific party. Sometimes, the decision about which candidate should ultimately win a seat is decided at the candidate selection stage. This is especially true in closed-party list systems and safe seats in majoritarian systems (Duverger 1959). Under such conditions, candidates placed high on party lists and those who are nominated in safe or winnable districts are highly likely to be elected irrespective of their personal attributes. In these cases, the election of candidates depends on whoever decides on the selection (Papp and Zorigt 2016). Nevertheless, even in open and semi-open list systems, how parties rank candidates on the ballot has a significant and deterministic effect on the proportion of women among those elected (Kunovich 2003; Millard, Popescu, and Tóka 2011). Thus, nomination for elected office is an obvious key step in women's political representation (Hinojosa 2012). In other words, gender differences in whom political parties nominate and where they nominate them have a significant impact on women's political representation (Butler and Robinson 2016)

The candidate selection procedures of political parties may vary depending on how centralized, exclusive, institutionalized, or formalized they are. Some empirical findings highlight that the centralization of candidate selection procedures (Aldrich 2018; Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2016; Rahat and Hazan 2001; Vandeleene et al. 2013), the formal selection criteria (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2017; Pruysers et al. 2017), and the informal aspects of selection (Bjarnegård and Kenny 2015, 2016; Cheng and Tavits 2011)) all affect female politicians' chances to get selected by their political parties and to receive a nomination for the elections in different ways. However, their findings are inconclusive. For instance, Bjarnegård and Kenny (2016) suggest that informal rules and practices are disadvantageous for female candidates. However, Piscopo (2019) argues that informality cannot be theorized as wholly negative for women, and informal networks of female elites in Mexico were successfully able to eliminate political parties' practices of allocating the least-viable candidacies to women. For this reason, it is still important to study exactly how different forms of candidate selection procedures affect women's political representation.

Previous literature on the development of party systems or party ideology in Central and Eastern Europe tended to pay little or no attention to gender (Chiva 2005). A few scholars (e.g., Millard 2004; Tóth and Ilonszki 2015) investigated how parties' candidate selection procedure affects women's representation in Hungary. However, they tended to analyze candidate selection using quantitative tools, i.e., they did not explore the informal aspects of the candidate selection procedure. Therefore, this dissertation aims to contribute to the political science literature and gender and politics literature by simultaneously examining both the formal and informal rules of the candidate selection procedure in a country and a region that is less researched. Moreover, the current literature on feminist institutionalism does not focus on Central and Eastern Europe, nor is feminist institutionalism or any new institutionalist approach present in Hungarian political science literature. Previous research (except, e.g., Várnagy and Ilonszki 2012) that has attempted to understand the reasons for women's political underrepresentation in Hungary has not specifically treated parties as gendered institutions. I see this as a shortcoming that this dissertation aims to remedy. Thus, there is undoubtedly a gap in the literature. For this reason, I believe that by taking Hungary as a case study, this dissertation contributes to the feminist institutionalism literature by examining a less researched region. Moreover, it may help to understand the reasons for women's chronic underrepresentation in Hungarian politics. Using the feminist institutionalism approach offers a unique opportunity to examine parties through a gender lens. Indeed, the dissertation brings the literature on political parties and gender and politics closer together.

It is essential to say that this dissertation adheres to feminist institutionalism principles mainly because the crucial aspect of feminism is its activism. With this dissertation, I aim to expose not only gender problems but also actively seek to change them, just as feminism does. At the same time, I understand those who fear adding a feminist label to research. For this reason, I think that feminist institutionalism does not necessarily have to be used as a theoretical and analytical framework. Nevertheless, my dissertation aims to highlight the need for political party researchers to remember that gender norms are strongly present in political parties and institutions. It is essential to understand what gender power dynamics prevail in parties when studying them. As Bjarnegård and Kenny (2016) argue, a clear picture of internal party dynamics requires a gender lens.

Examining the candidate selection procedure is important for women's representation and a better understanding of internal democracy within parties and candidates. De Luca et

al. (2002) argue that how political parties select their candidates for public office deeply affects the types of people elected and how these people later behave in office. Some suggest that the candidate selection procedure also provides information on how parties function internally and where power is located within a party and a country. Ilonszki (1996) argues that candidate selection is a critical factor that provides a good indicator of internal democracy within a party. Rahat (2007) also suggests that the procedure of candidate selection and its examination in itself is crucial for many reasons: 1) Political consequences determine who can be a member of parliament (MP), and the selection procedure influences the behavior of a successful candidate in parliament. For example, centralized candidate selection is more likely to result in candidates loyal to the party center. In contrast, decentralized candidate selection is more likely to result in candidates loyal to the local party organizations. 2) If one considers parties as agents of voters, then candidates are agents of parties, which means that candidates follow party instructions and are loyal to the parties. 3) The candidate selection procedure reveals the balance of power within parties and who holds power in the organization. 4) Because of personalization, candidates have begun to play a more significant role than parties; therefore, their selection procedure is crucial (Papp 2015).

1.2 Puzzle and Research Question

It is necessary to focus on parties and their internal procedures to understand women's political representation. Candidate selection is not only a core organizational feature of political parties but also influences women's chances of becoming a representative in the legislature. The selection of candidates is particularly worth examining because parties will change it relatively easily and quickly if it turns out to be the main reason for women's political under-representation. Nevertheless, this also requires that the parties have political interest and will for stronger women's political representation. This dissertation has two main research questions. The first research question is how exactly candidate selection rules and practices affect women's parliamentary representation. In other words, which forms of candidate selection procedures could lead to a lower or higher representation of women? I argue that different candidate selection methods affect women's representation differently. The second research question that motivates this dissertation is to what extent are parties and their candidate selection procedures responsible for women's chronic and stable underrepresentation in the Hungarian parliament?

The dissertation relies on a mixed methods design whereby preliminary hypotheses are first examined regarding face validity against actors' perceptions. Qualitative in-depth

interviews with actors intimately involved in the selection procedure help to refine and enrich the range of theoretically derived hypotheses. In contrast, cross-national and cross-sectional quantitative analyses explore the explanatory power of these hypotheses. I also double-checked the evidence on the importance of various factors in quantitative analysis in the very same context where the qualitative interviews were conducted. Part of the dissertation's heuristic value lies in the choice of empirical context. The reason for choosing a mixed methods design is that quantitative analyses make it crucial to study the formal aspects of candidate selection on women's descriptive representation. However, this alone would not be enough to capture the candidate selection procedure, which this dissertation aims to do. The candidate selection procedure is a complex topic; therefore, a single quantitative analysis can capture only some aspects of this long and peculiar procedure. Moreover, scholars who work on the relationship between candidate selection and women's representation argue that qualitative research is necessary to gain more information about the informal aspects of selection (see, e.g., Bjarnegård and Kenny 2015, 2016; Tóth and Ilonszki 2015a, 2015b).

The research questions are addressed in two primary ways. On the one hand, I examine how different formal rules for selecting and nominating candidates affect the representation of women in different parties and countries. This analysis investigates which candidate selection method favors or hinders women's representation in parliament. I examine the candidate selection procedure along three dimensions: centralization, inclusiveness, and institutionalization. I chose these aspects because they are general and allow for comparison between parties and countries. They also allow for intervention from a policy point of view. On the other hand, a large part of the dissertation relies on the case of Hungary, which allows us to investigate the reasons for women's continuous underrepresentation in politics and try to understand the role of political parties in this. In the Hungarian case, I analyze the three aspects of candidate selection, i.e., centralization, exclusiveness, and institutionalization, in more depth. Furthermore, I study how formal and informal nomination rules interact in the parties and whether there is a gap between the formal structures of the parties and how parties function in practice. Lastly, I aim to answer whether the candidate selection procedure is the reason why women's parliamentary representation has stagnated at 10 percent for the past 30 years. Women's underrepresentation in parliament is a systemic and pervasive feature of Hungarian politics. Moreover, the Hungarian Parliament has one of the lowest proportions of women in Europe, while everywhere else, the proportion of women in parliament is steadily rising. More and

more countries in Central and Eastern Europe elect female heads of state and prime ministers.

While the political representation of women is unequal in Hungary, previous research shows that the situation is much more equal regarding women's willingness to express their political opinions or participate in elections by voting (21 Kutatóközpont 2021; Republikon Institute 2020). Thus, women are more active politically than they are represented. Furthermore, the proportion of female candidates increases with each election, so there seems to be no shortage of political ambition among women. The proportion of women candidates was around 10 percent in 1990 and reached 30 percent in 2018, while the proportion of women MPs is still stagnating at around 10 percent. The increasing number of female candidates does not result in an increased number of female representatives in parliament. This makes Hungary an extreme case because the share of women nominated by parties usually strongly correlates with the women elected to the legislature (Gauja and Cross 2015).

It seems that there is a growing proportion of women on the supply side are interested in politics, informed about politics in the country, and running for office as candidates. Therefore, the real question is, why can women not transfer candidacy into legislative seats? What explains the stable and chronic underrepresentation of women in legislature in Hungary? A few scholars have already suggested that parties are the main actors responsible for women's underrepresentation in Hungary (Ilonszki and Várnagy 2007; Várnagy and Ilonszki 2012). However, somehow most studies are still looking for other conventional explanations, such electoral system or women's motivations, rather than trying to understand better the internal mechanism of parties and the question of where precisely the parties' role as gatekeepers is most pronounced. Therefore, more studies must examine how and why political parties hinder women's political representation. Because it is clear from the election data that the main problem is not that parties are not nominating women but that women are not becoming MPs. Rather than just blaming the electorate, I would like to investigate what the parties are responsible for.

1.3 Research Design and Methods

In this dissertation, I apply a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods. While quantitative methods are more common in comparative politics, I considered it essential to understand the actors' perceptions because the numbers alone do not explain why women's political representation is low in some countries such as Hungary. Although previous research

gives some reasons for the low political representation of women, what the participants, i.e., aspirants, candidates, representatives, and selectors themselves, think about the reasons, and what they think of the candidate selection procedure is also important. This dissertation aims to capture the perceptions and reality as much as possible. Although the dissertation may appear to be a single case study, it is more than that, with chapters comparing several countries and parties and other chapters focusing on Hungary, including cross-party comparisons.

The other argument in favor of mixed method research was that certain aspects of candidate selection procedures could be measured well by quantitative methods. However, other more informal aspects could only be explored through qualitative methods such as interviews and text analysis of documents. Many details of candidate selection and nomination procedure can only be understood if one speaks to those involved in the procedure who are familiar with the backroom deals of politicians. Thus, I use quantitative and qualitative data and analyses in this dissertation. The different chapters will include descriptive statistics, multivariate models, analysis of interviews, and other documents. For any reliable research, triangulation of findings and analyses is essential. This research obtained evidence from the analysis of documents, interviews, surveys, and databases.

First, semi-structured in-depth interviews were employed to play several issues and allow the inclusion of experiences raised by the respondents. The qualitative interviews aim to clarify the literature, generate new hypotheses, and test and verify plausibility. The empirics informing the qualitative part of this dissertation are conversations with the interviewees about their motivations, experiences, beliefs, and perceptions related to candidate selection and women and politics. Although these are their interpretations and may not be accurate explanations for women's underrepresentation in politics, in any case, it is their perception and may even affect their behavior. However, one must be careful to conclude that what interviewees say is necessarily a good predictor of what they do in reality. Jerolmack and Khan (2014) argue that there is not always consistency between attitudes and action. Moreover, respondents do not consistently reproduce what has happened to them because of time. It is also important to remember that an interview situation can reveal as much as the respondent wants to share with the researcher during the interview (Dean and Whyte 1958). Thus, I do not view the interviews as unshakable evidence but as one that can generate new hypotheses or complement theoretical explanations from the literature and quantitative

analyzes. Therefore, looking for hard facts or proof-checking the interviewees' answers is outside the scope of this dissertation.

I chose the semi-structured in-depth interviews as a data collection method for three main reasons. First, they allow relatively free storytelling while still guided by a few questions. This way, it is possible to understand the interviewees' narratives, but the questions help them stay on the topic. Second, the in-depth interview is a valuable tool to identify both the diversity of experiences or interpretations of the same issue and common categories among the interview materials. Third, this interview technique is considered best when interviewing elite members because one does not want to waste the respondent's time, but it also gives some room for them to elaborate on the questions (Bozóki 2011; Hochschild 2009). Members of the elite may prefer interviews over other more time-consuming methods, e.g., focus groups or surveys.

Second, as a triangulation, I also conducted a survey among aspirants to increase the validity of the empirical results (Patton 1999). I thought the survey method would work for aspirants because they do not classify as members of the elite yet, but at the same time, I was able to reach more people that way. Previous research rarely covers aspirants because they are challenging to identify and are usually only recognized once they become candidates. For this reason, this survey is an exciting contribution to this dissertation. The survey was filled in by the participants of a political training/school designed for women who aspire to political careers. These participants can be considered aspirants because they voluntarily decided to participate in this training, which prepares them for a political career. The training was organized by the Indítsuk be Magyarországot Foundation of the Momentum political party. In this survey, I asked the participants about their political motivations and why they are interested in becoming politicians and investigated what they think about women's political representation and what public policy topics they would like to address if they got into politics, among other things.

Third, I used quantitative methods for real-life behavior data. On the one hand, I analyze the organizational barriers to women's underrepresentation and the extent to which the party-level explanatory variables explain the Hungarian case in *Chapter 4*. Thus, this analysis focuses on party organizations, complemented by other institutional factors such as gender quota and electoral system variables. On the other hand, I present a within-country analysis of Hungary in *Chapter 5*. Using a candidate-level data set, I analyze whether

primaries as a relatively inclusive candidate selection procedure can enhance women's representation or not. In these chapters, I use different multivariate models and choose which model to use based on the dependent variable. The individual chapters will discuss the data and variables in more detail.

1.4 Data Collection

For the interviews, I used theoretical sampling, which means that the data is collected in a way that each next step would stimulate further theory development (Alvesson and Skoldberg 2000; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Silverman and Marvasti 2008; Strauss 1987). I have seen this data collection used successfully in several studies that aimed to set up analytical categories and further classify them (see e.g. Potapova 2021). Theoretical sampling occurs as the data collection progresses. I found this to be vital because many unknown facts about the candidate selection procedure exist, and I believe that our knowledge about this will evolve as the interviews occur.

In theoretical sampling, the researcher first identifies the research topic and question and then selects a few people to interview based on a specific set of criteria. Following these first interviews, the researcher analyzes these data. Based on the results of this data analysis, the researcher identifies more people to interview. This involves selecting some of the participants with a minimal difference in some characteristics considered crucial for original selection, while other participants are as different as possible. This sampling logic aims to find people who confirm what the researcher has already found but also to find participants who can disconfirm the previous findings. If there are new participants, the researcher interviews them and analyzes the data. Theoretical sampling continues like this, moving back and forth between sampling, interviews (data collection), and analysis until the research reaches data saturation. Data saturation is the point in the research procedure when no added information is discovered in the data analysis. This redundancy signals researchers that data collection may cease (Faulkner and Trotter 2017). At this point, adding new interviews does not significantly contribute to findings but replicates the argumentation (Hennink, Hutter, and Bailey 2011).

The way respondents are selected in theoretical sampling is similar to purposeful or purposive sampling, but they differ in the stage at which participants are selected (Coyne 1997; Strauss and Corbin 1990). In purposeful sampling, researchers decide the participant sampling criteria before conducting research. Both theoretical and purposive sampling implies that the researcher keeps an open mind toward experiences and learning during data

collection while also focusing on the richest cases and continuing their collection until saturation (Emmel 2013; Silverman 2013).

Theoretical or purposive sampling is the opposite of representative sampling, which aims to feature all the essential characteristics of the studied population on an equal and balanced basis. Nevertheless, theoretical sampling is not purely voluntary or arbitrary despite the flexibility. Theoretical expedience directs the selection criteria, which means that the sample should be of sufficient size to test the theory or build other meaningful theories (Bryman 1988; Silverman 2013). There may be some criticism of this choice regarding the problem of generalizability, but many qualitative researchers still question the possibility of generalizing social practices to the entire statistical population (Sacks 1992; Silverman 2013).

The analysis draws on a corpus of twenty-seven in-depth interviews with politicians of the main parties running in the 2018 and 2022 elections in Hungary: Fidesz, MSZP, Jobbik, LMP, Momentum, Párbeszéd, Együtt, and DK. See the demographics of the interview population in Table 1.

Table 1 Demographics of interviewees

Gender	9 men
	18 women
Political Party	3 DK,
	3 P
	3 Együtt
	4 MSZP
	4 Jobbik[1]
	5 Momentum
	2 LMP
	2 Liberálisok
	1 Fidesz[2]

I focus on parties that had a chance to get into parliament since they have a real stake in the candidate selection and nomination procedure. Therefore, I exclude from the analysis those parties that, based on polls and previous elections, have no real chance of getting into parliament. It is necessary to understand both the candidates' and the selectors' perspectives regarding the candidate selection procedure. On the one hand, the respondents include party leaders and selectors who are responsible within the party for recruiting and selecting. I thought these were the people who would know the most about a party's nomination and selection procedures. On the other hand, it consists of aspirants, candidates, and members of parliaments (MPs), whose experiences are also crucial to understanding the candidate selection procedure and the reasons behind women's underrepresentation in Hungarian politics. I assume that people who are not selectors know less about candidate selection by default, but it might still be interesting to know what they understand about it.

[1]One of the interviewees was no longer a member of Jobbik at the time of the interview but belonged to another party, but was able to speak credibly about Jobbik's candidate selection procedure.

[2]Unfortunately, other Fidesz candidates and MPs I approached refused to give interviews. One of them even wrote that I should try to interview leftist and liberal politicians on this topic because they would be more willing to speak. The fact that Fidesz politicians were reluctant to give interviews is not surprising because other research also confirms that they are not allowed to speak up. The party leader personally bans these interviews. See, e.g. https://merce.hu/2020/06/21/a-bizottsagi-tagok-megfelemlitesetol-az-illegalis-mozgositasig-igy-csalhattak-sok-helyutt-a-tavalyi-valasztasokon/

The respondents come from local and national levels and include female and male politicians. Studying the motivations and experiences of female and male politicians in various positions is crucial as they all experience candidate selection procedures and women's representation from different angles. For example, women and men might have distinct perceptions regarding why women do or do not stand as election candidates. However, I oversample women to ensure that their diverse voices and perspectives are included. The first interviews produced other contacts, following a snowball procedure. To have full and detailed recounts, the names of the interviewees are changed since confidentiality was always a condition. Thus, interviewees remain anonymous but are identified with fictional names to make reading easier.

The data for this qualitative part is collected in three ways. The first interviews were conducted between December 2017 and May 2018 and took, on average, 60 minutes, although one-third of the interviews exceeded 90 minutes (about one and a half hours). All in-person interviews (except for one email) were mostly conducted in the respondents' private offices. However, some participants chose to be interviewed in coffee shops and restaurants. The second round of interviews was conducted between April 2021 and September 2022, primarily online via Zoom because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Finally, there was a third round of interviews in spring-summer 2022 to add or clarify some information. I audiotaped and took notes during all interviews. I also transcribed all interviews for analysis. After transcribing interviews, I read transcripts multiple times. I used thematic analysis to capture the different perceptions of candidate selection and motivation (Nowell et al. 2017). First, I open-coded factors in the respondents' answers that I deemed essential about their selections, motivations in accepting a candidacy, and the reasons for women's underrepresentation in politics. Then I noted the common answers in the various interviews. Finally, I grouped the common answers.

Usually, each interview started with a question about how the respondent got into politics and ended with whether they think it is vital to increase women's political representation and, if so, why. The questions slightly varied depending on the respondents' willingness to share their stories. Some respondents were more at ease and discussed a lot on their own the issues I aimed to ask them about, but some needed more guidance and specific questions. The first part of the interviews focused on the beginning of their political careers, giving space for personal thoughts on how each person became involved in politics, who helped or encouraged their political career, and why they wanted to be in politics. This part

aimed to understand their path to politics and their motivations to run as candidates. Understanding their political ambitions and motivations can help determine whether there is any difference between women's and men's ambitions to enter the political arena, as suggested in the previous literature.

The second part was about the role of parties and their candidate selection procedures in women's representation. This part aimed to understand how parties select their candidates, the effect this has on women's representation, what influences their candidate selection procedures and why so few women get selected and elected. In the third part, the focus was on women and politics, and the interviewees were asked about the explanations and reasons behind women's underrepresentation in general and in Hungary. This part aimed to study the conditions that favor or hinder the participation of women in politics from the perspectives of aspirants, candidates, and selectors. Moreover, it hoped to answer the following questions: why do they think there are so few women in politics, why would it be good to have more women in politics, and what does it mean to be a female politician in Hungary?

The literature suggests that traditionally leftist and liberal parties are more committed to women's political participation (Tóth and Ilonszki 2015a). However, the changes in the electoral law in Hungary affected the leftist and liberal parties' candidate selection procedures, and other aspects may have influenced the candidate selection procedure more than the party ideology. For example, opposition parties decided to run together for the 2022 elections, which meant they aimed to have one opposition candidate in each single-member district and one common party list. They organized primaries in the fall of 2021 to decide who should be the joint opposition candidate in the single-member districts. Thus, in the second and third rounds of interviews, I conducted in 2021 and 2022, I aimed to analyze whether parties pay any attention to gender balance when designing nomination rules for primary rules or making a final decision on candidates. Thus, the interview guide has evolved after the first few interviews, but the final interview guide and questions are in Appendix 2.

I surveyed political aspirants who participated in the Horizont Political School for Women program by Indítsuk be Magyarországot Foundation, which the Momentum Party founded. The program's leaders helped me to distribute the questionnaire among the participants. The questionnaire was sent to two classes in the school. The first class completed the questionnaire in spring 2021, while the second completed it in summer 2021.

In the first round, there were 15 respondents, a response rate of almost 100 percent. In contrast, there were ten respondents in the second round, meaning that almost 70 percent of the participants completed the questionnaire. The content of the questionnaire is available in Appendix 3. However, in this dissertation, I only look at the answers to the open-ended questions because I found the number of cases too small for quantitative analysis.

The first comparative quantitative analysis is significantly built on cross-sectional data from the Political Party Dabatase (PPDB) Project on party organizational structures and practices. The PPDB Project includes 122 parties from 19 countries, including North America, Latin America, Europe, and Australia. Thus, the unit of analysis was a single political party in one of the 19 countries. This project focuses on the official story, which means that their data collection relies on analyzing party documents and internal regulations (Poguntke et al. 2017). This data was collected by international experts working in different countries and was released in 2018. The experts focused on the textual analysis of the party statutes for each party in the data set to map out the official party rules, party resources, party structures, and internal decision-making. Since parties are influenced by the context in which they exist, I supplemented these party-level variables with institutional variables such as the electoral system and country-specific variables such as the level of human development in each country.

I created my own database for the second quantitative chapter, which is entirely based on Hungary. In this chapter, I analyzed the effect of primaries on women's political representation. Thus most of the data came from the official primary website. I thought it was essential to compare the data with other sites, so I checked the data from several sources and made changes where necessary. The unit of analysis was the candidate standing in the single-member district. The data and variables are discussed in more detail in each quantitative chapter.

1.5 Structure of the Dissertation

Following up on this introduction, *Chapter 2* outlines the puzzle of this dissertation, i.e., why there is almost no increase in the proportion of female representatives when the proportion of female candidates is steadily increasing. Furthermore, why does the proportion of women in the Hungarian Parliament remain low when the proportion of women is continuously increasing everywhere else? The chapter presents a detailed overview of the conventional explanations given in the existing literature for the chronically low level of women in Hungarian politics and the explanations given by the Hungarian politicians I interviewed, and

the aspirants I surveyed. The chapter's central claim is that the conventional explanations suggested by the literature, such as the electoral system and voter preferences, do not provide sufficient explanations for the low proportion of women in parliament in Hungary. The data shows that the proportion of women among candidates has been steadily increasing. In contrast, that among MPs has not, which is why this dissertation takes a closer look at the candidate selection procedures of political parties and their impact on women's political representation. Interviewees indeed suggest that parties are specifically to blame for the low political representation of women.

Chapter 3 tests the impact of different candidate selection rules on women's representation in parliament. The first section examines the candidate selection procedures from three aspects: (1) the number of people involved in the procedure (exclusive vs. inclusive), (2) whether the candidate nomination and selection itself is decided at the national level or the local level (centralized vs. decentralized), and (3) the degree to which the procedure is formalized or institutionalized (institutionalized vs. non-institutionalized). I argue that these different candidate selection procedures affect women's political representation in separate ways. The multivariate analysis shows that decentralized, inclusive, and institutionalized candidate selection results in a higher parliamentary representation of women than centralized, exclusive, and non-institutionalized candidate selection procedures. The chapter's main lesson is that the choice of the form of the candidate selection procedure has an impact on the number of women in parliament. Furthermore, parties' candidate selection needs to be more inclusive, decentralized, and institutionalized if a stronger political representation of women is a goal for them.

Chapter 4 focuses on candidate selection patterns in Hungary. In the first section, the chapter shows what the Hungarian major parties' selection procedures look like regarding the formal rules through an analysis of party documents. Candidate selection procedures are classified according to the criteria described in the previous chapter (exclusive vs. inclusive, centralized vs. decentralized, institutionalized vs. non-institutionalized). The analysis of party documents shows that parties are heterogenous regarding the formal rules and can be placed at different levels of these exclusive vs. inclusive, centralized vs. decentralized, and institutionalized vs. non-institutionalized scales. In the second section of the chapter, based on the interviewees, I describe how the procedures of candidate selection in the parties look like in practice. The interviews suggest that informal norms are very noticeable in selecting candidates regardless of the formal rules, which is the case for all parties. Moreover, informal

norms override formal rules, negatively affecting women's representation in parliament. The chapter's central claim is that, although parties differ in their candidate selection procedures based on formal party rules, the interviewees' perceptions indicate that parties are more homogeneous in their candidate selection procedures. Moreover, the party has to leave less room for informality, which is not favorable for female candidates.

Chapter 5 examines whether party primaries, as a more inclusive and decentralized form of candidate selection procedures, result in a stronger political representation of women. The chapter focuses on the relationship between party primaries and women's political representation. Hungary's first primaries in the autumn of 2021 provided an excellent opportunity to examine these questions. The chapter presents two main analyses. The first analysis focuses on the effect of gender and other personal and political characteristics such as age and political experience on candidates' vote share in the primaries and their rankings. The second analysis studies the effect of these variables in which single-member districts candidates are run because the chapter aims to look at whether parties run their women candidates in the most or least likely to win single-member districts. Descriptive data show that more women stood in single-member districts in the primaries than in previous elections. The multivariate analyses also confirm that women are not disadvantaged in the primaries, but contrary to the expectations, parties do not necessarily field women in unwinnable constituencies. This shows that primaries can be more beneficial for women than candidate selection without open primaries.

Chapter 6 focuses on the analysis of the results of the interviews. Both the international and the Hungarian literature have confirmed that women are regularly elected in single-member districts or placed on party lists where they have no chance of entering parliament. According to the literature, parties extensively use women as sacrificial lambs, as the party is forced to field a certain number of candidates for elections. According to the interviewees, women accept these "hopeless" (non-winnable positions) for three main reasons, 1) they consider it an excellent "golden" opportunity even if they are not placed well because they do not get such opportunities otherwise, and 2) running for and participating in national candidacy and elections are seen as a helpful tool for women who otherwise want to participate in local politics, 3) women may feel more loyalty and sense of obligation to help their party and country compared to men.

Finally, in conclusion, I first present the main findings of the thesis. Then, the second section presents the implications of these findings and policy recommendations on how to increase the proportion of women in parliament. Even though I am not writing this dissertation in the Public Policy track, this research has policy relevance. I hope this dissertation contributes to the improvement of the status of women in politics. The third section introduces the contribution and limitations of the dissertation. Finally, I present potential future research directions in the last section.

2 Chapter: the Hungarian Puzzle

This chapter shows why I chose Hungary as the main case study for my dissertation. Hungary is a good case study for several reasons. It is crucial to understand why women's representation in parliament has stagnated at around 10 percent for the last thirty years, while everywhere else in the world, the proportion of women in parliament has been steadily rising. Figure 1 shows that the proportion of women in Hungary was 12.6 percent in the 2018 elections. In all other regions of the world, the proportion of women in the legislature is much higher. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (2019), Hungary and Malta have the lowest number of female representatives among the European Union countries. It is ranked 146th out of 192 countries in the representation of women in national parliaments. Hungary is falling further down the rankings with each election.

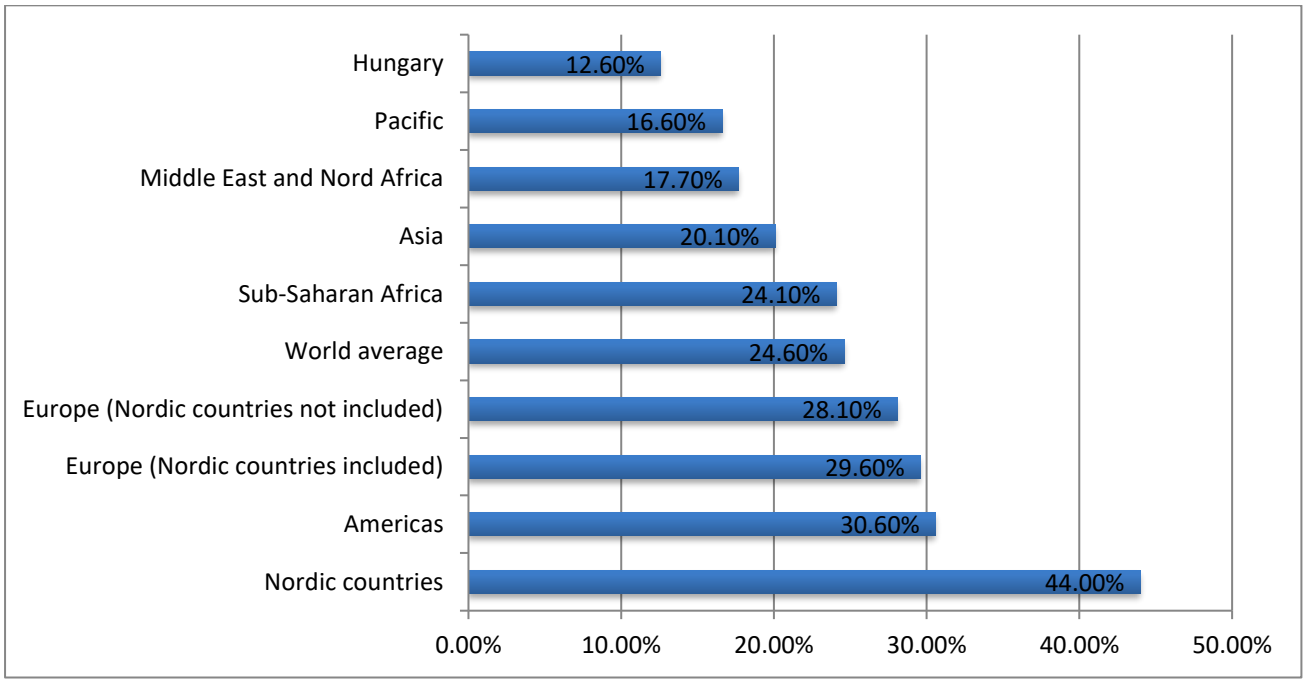

Figure 1: World and regional averages of the percentage of women in parliament (Single House or lower House – %)

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2019, own calculation

The central puzzle is not only why women's representation in parliament is low but also persistently low. The low proportion of women in parliament is one of the most stable features of the Hungarian political system, which has endured changes in government, transformations of party systems, and electoral law reform (Várnagy 2013). The above figure shows that women's political representation is much higher and steadily increasing almost everywhere, except in Hungary.

Many studies investigated the reasons for the low representation of women in Hungary. However, these studies relied mainly on aspects that may have worked in Western Europe but less so in Central and Eastern Europe. Indeed, the role of parties and their nomination procedures have been overlooked in women's representation. On the other hand, the academic literature on candidate selection has paid little attention to Central and Eastern Europe. Therefore, this dissertation also offers an opportunity to fill a gap in the literature. It aims to investigate more closely the selection mechanisms within and across political parties in Hungary. Hungary provides a fantastic opportunity to examine the role of parties, especially the impact of candidate selection and nomination on women's political representation. The reason for this is that parties vary in terms of the opportunities they provide for female candidates and the way they select their candidates. I argue that there are several lessons to be learned from the Hungarian case, which can also be generalized and applied to other countries.

Previous literature in Central and Eastern Europe, and Hungary has suggested that the representation of women in the legislature is the result of cultural, socio-economic, institutional, and political factors or a combination of these (Wolchik and Chiva 2021). However, these general variables do not provide a satisfactory explanation. I will outline below the most conventional causes often mentioned in the literature to explain women's chronic underrepresentation in Hungarian politics. After introducing these arguments, I will explain why, in my opinion, these variables cannot fully explain the Hungarian case and why one should look deeper into the candidate selection procedures of political parties.

2.1 Cultural Explanations

Some previous studies suggest that the low representation of women in parliament is due to cultural explanations. Negative attitudes towards feminists, communist-era gender quotas, and traditional gender norms are usually cited as having direct or less direct adverse effects on women's representation in Hungary (Galligan and Clavero 2008; Galligan, Clavero, and Calloni 2008; Ilonszki and Montgomery 2002). Early studies in post-socialist European countries suggest that communist legacies, especially direct emancipation, might have discouraged women from entering politics and made them skeptical of feminism (Einhorn 1993; Funk and Mueller 1993; Matland and Montgomery 2003). In contrast, men became more eager to form parties and engage in politics. Later studies also emphasized the cultural explanations, such as the prevalence of traditional gender stereotypes and the absence of feminist movements (Einhorn and Sever 2003; Galligan and Clavero 2008; Galligan, Clavero,

and Calloni 2008; Kunovich 2012; Marody 1993; Matland and Montgomery 2003; Montgomery and Ilonszki 2003).

It is often argued that the post-communist settings have been unfavorable for women's representation due to the patriarchal culture maintained in the communist period. Although under communist rule, women achieved a superior level of literacy, education, and participation in the workforce, they did not develop the level of political organization that accompanied increased gender equality in the West (Moser 2001). Women were well represented in the communist-era governmental bodies. For example, women's proportion in parliament increased from 18 to 30 percent between 1949 and 1980 (Várnagy 2013). However, important decisions were not made in parliament at the time. Therefore, women's superior levels of formal representation never translated into real political power. Women seemed to lose much descriptive representation when competitive and multi-party elections were introduced in 1989 and 1990. In other words, the introduction of democracy has failed to involve women in the political procedure. The repeated failure of parliamentary votes or popular initiatives to introduce quotas is also partly due to the communist-era top-down initiatives to create a false egalitarian society. This idea of enforced equality caused resentment among many people, which is why still some people today, for example, oppose the introduction of gender quotas (Várnagy 2013).

Furthermore, some argue that post-communist countries have not achieved a level of political and socio-economic development that has allowed women to organize. Thus they could not take advantage of institutional opportunities (Matland 1998). Hungary's civil society sector is weak, and few women's organizations are specifically dedicated to promoting women's political participation and representation (Montgomery and Ilonszki 2003). As Fábián (2007) argues, there are women's organizations, but most of them are not involved in activism around political issues and instead are active on issues such as welfare and education. Because women's organizations are still in a marginalized position, it cannot be expected that they could influence political parties, especially their way of selecting candidates for an election. Despite the existence of women's organizations, one cannot yet speak of a 'women's movement' in Hungary. As a result, no social base would pressure parties or legislators to take measures to promote women's representation in politics, e.g., the introduction of a gender quota. Furthermore, several attempts in Hungary to introduce legal quotas to increase female representation in politics failed due to insufficient social mobilization and a lack of political will (Várnagy 2013).

Nevertheless, there were times when women's organizations were involved in legislative work. For example, the Council for Women's Affairs functioned between 1999 and 2002, and it comprised representatives of all ministries and the prime minister, six members from national women's associations, three from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working on women's issues, and five academics studying gender relations (Chiva 2005). However, the lack of analyses and reports concerning its activities suggests that it likely had a limited formal impact on legislation regarding women's issues in Hungary (Chiva 2005). From time to time, there is also a less successful attempt by civil society organizations to increase women's political representation. In 2007, a few women's organizations worked together to introduce a statutory gender quota. Before the 2014 elections, they issued a joint statement highlighting the negative impact of electoral rules on women's representation and proposed a 50 percent gender quota on party lists (Várnagy 2013). However, unfortunately, these awareness-raising campaigns have neither had much impact nor much success.

To determine the extent to which the communist past is decisive, it is worth looking at how the proportion of women in parliament has developed in other post-communist countries. Table 2 shows the trend in the proportion of female MPs in the post-communist states of Central-Eastern Europe. While in Hungary, the share of women increased from almost 8 percent to 12 percent from 1990 to 2018, in Romania, the share of women increased from less than 4 percent to almost 19 percent from 1990 to 2020. Moreover, in all other post-communist countries, the share of women is now above 20 percent, and some have even reached 30 percent (e.g., Croatia). This shows that despite the similar cultural and historical backgrounds, other post-communist countries do much better in terms of women's representation. Therefore, only the communist legacies do not account for women's underrepresentation, especially 30 years after the democratic transition (Montgomery and Ilonszki 2016).

Table 2: Changes in the proportion of female MPs in Central-Eastern Europe

	Year of first democratic elections	Percentage of female MPs in the lower house	Year of last democratic elections	Percentage of female MPs in the lower house
Bulgaria	1990	8.2%	2021	23.8%
Croatia	1992	4.0%	2020	31.1%
Czech Republic	1990	10%	2017	23%
Estonia	1990	5.7%	2019	25.7%
Hungary	1990	7.8%	2018[3]	12.1%
Latvia	1990	15%	2018	29%
Lithuania	1990	9.9%	2020	27.7%
Poland	1991	9.1%	2019	28.3%
Romania	1990	3.7%	2020	18.5%
Slovakia	1990	12%	2020	22.7%
Slovenia	1990	13.3%	2018	26.7%

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union, IPU (https://data.ipu.org/women-ranking?month=6&year=2021, August 2021) and (Montgomery and Ilonszki 2016; Várnagy 2013)

To understand why the Hungarian case is puzzling regarding women's representation in parliament, it is also worth taking a closer look at the Visegrad countries, which share remarkably similar cultural and historical traditions. The Visegrad countries (also known as the Visegrad Four) include four countries: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia. The above table shows that Hungary is also significantly far from the other three Visegrad countries regarding women's legislative representation. In Poland, the proportion of women is 28 percent; in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, this ratio is around 23 percent, while in Hungary, the proportion of women legislators reached 12 percent in 2018, which is the highest ratio since the country's first democratic election in 1990 (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019).

To accept the explanatory power of cultural causes, it is worth examining whether women occupy leading positions in other important spheres of life outside politics, such as

[3] In Hungary, the last election was in 2022, but the analyses in this dissertation were conducted up to the 2021 primaries. Thus, the 2022 election data are not included.

the economy. If, for example, it can be seen that women are not given leading positions in economic life either, this may indicate that society believes that leading positions are not for women. However, if women can move up the career ladder in the economic sphere, why can they not do so in politics? Table 3 shows the proportion of women in business and management in the Visegrad 4 countries, with significant differences. As in women's political representation, Poland has the highest number of women in managerial positions and leadership. However, Hungary has the second-highest proportion of women in various managerial positions, almost 40 percent. Slovakia and the Czech Republic have much lower proportions of women in managerial positions in the business. This suggests that cultural factors alone cannot explain the small number of women in politics. The question remains if women in business have achieved a high proportion of leadership positions, even in Hungary, why are they not able to do so in the political sphere?

Table 3: Women at different levels of management in the V4 countries, 2017 (%)

	Czech Republic	Hungary	Poland	Slovakia
Female employment in managerial positions	24.6	39.4	41.3	32.8
Female employment in middle and senior management	24.1	37.6	38.2	30.3

Source: Women in Business and Management. The business case for change: Maps and charts, https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/multimedia/maps-and-charts/enhanced/WCMS_698027/lang--en/index.htm, Retrieved: 09.11.2021

2.1.1 Traditional Attitudes and Voters' Bias

Among the cultural reasons, one of the most frequently used arguments is that women's low political representation is due to traditional societal attitudes and that voters do not vote for female candidates for two main reasons. On the one hand, they perceive women as less qualified for a political career than men, and on the other hand, they believe that women's place is in the domestic sphere. However, much empirical research has shown that voters do not discriminate based on gender (Anzia and Berry 2011; Black and Erickson 2003; McElroy and Marsh 2010). Research shows that if the parties give women the nomination, they perform as well as male candidates (Darcy, Clark, and Welch 1994). Like empirical findings in other countries, scholars working in Hungary also rejected this hypothesis that voters are biased against female candidates (Ilonszki and Montgomery 2002).

The social belief or the gender stereotype that a political office is more suitable for men is slowly changing in Eastern Europe (Galligan and Clavero 2008, Scharle 2015). This is confirmed by the fact that more and more countries in Central and Eastern Europe, from Slovakia to Georgia and Estonia, are electing female prime ministers and heads of state. Moreover, Tóth and Ilonszki (2015a) argue that the rising proportion of women in politics and the declining levels of public trust in politics has led voters to be more willing to vote for women. Not the voters but the party leaders who still think along with traditional stereotypes. Montgomery and Ilonszki (2003) argue that party gatekeepers in Hungary prefer male candidates over female candidates to run in the single-member district elections because they think that voters would not vote for female candidates in the majoritarian tier. This also suggests that the electoral system might be an intermediate variable affecting party leaders' selection.

Even though there are still strong perceptions about the traditional roles of women and men in Hungary, the attitude seems to change slowly. In 1990, almost half of the adult population (47 percent of the respondents) agreed with the statement that *'women are responsible for the family and the household, while the affairs of the country belong to men,'* and only one-third of the respondents rejected the claim (Molnár 1990). In 2020, only 39 percent agreed, 29 percent agreed and disagreed, and 31 percent disagreed with the statement that *'men's job is to earn money and wives should take care of the household and children'* (Republikon Institute 2020). Even female respondents answered the question in a similar proportion. A similar trend can be seen when questions were asked not about gender roles in general but specifically about women's political representation. The question '*would it be better to have more women in political leadership?'* was asked in two different surveys in 1990 and 2017, and the answers illustrate well how people's attitudes have changed over the past 30 years. A survey by the Hungarian Institute for Public Opinion Research (Magyar Közvéleménykutató Intézet) found that in 1990, 53 percent of respondents were against having more women in political leadership, and only 32 percent thought it would be better to have more women in political leadership (Molnár 1990). In contrast, according to a 2017 Eurobarometer survey, only 32 percent of respondents in Hungary think there are enough women in political positions, and 57 percent think there should be more women in politics. However, this comparison should be treated with caution, as the results of the two polls are not fully comparable.

A similar trend can be seen when respondents are asked about the qualifications of female and male politicians and what they think of the changing roles of women and men in the world. In the World Value Survey in 1998, 49 percent of respondents agreed that *'men are better political leaders than women,'* while 45 percent disagreed. In the World Value Survey in 2009, only 38 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement, and 57 percent of the respondents rejected the statement (Inglehart et al. 2014). In 1998, most respondents thought men were better political leaders than women. Nevertheless, by 2009, almost two-thirds of respondents think that men are not better political leaders than women. The proportion of people who disagree with this statement has risen by more than ten percentage points in ten years. According to a survey conducted by the Integrity Lab (2016) in 2016, 76 percent disagreed with the statement that *'female politicians are less able to make tough decisions'*, and only 17 percent agreed. Furthermore, only 12 percent of respondents agreed, and 84 percent disagreed with the statement that *'the reason there are fewer women in parliament is that women are less qualified to be politicians'*

However, regarding the most important political position, some voters seem reluctant to see a woman as prime minister in Hungary. In a poll initiated by Medián Opinion and Market Research Institute, they asked respondents to rank party leaders on a scale of 0-10 in terms of likeability. It turned out that Bernadett Szél, the only female candidate for prime minister at the time and then co-leader of LMP, was relatively unpopular among women (Kovarek and Littvay 2019). This was especially interesting because LMP was trying to appeal to women by running a female candidate for prime minister, and the party has had a gender quota for a long time. Nevertheless, it is essential to note that other factors may also be accounted for her relative unpopularity among the voters, e.g., loss of popularity by the party.

2.1.2 Women's Ambition

It is often argued that there are few women in politics because women have little political ambition and are not as interested in politics as men. However, the problem is that political ambition is difficult to measure. At the same time, it is possible to infer whether women have the ambition to run for office. On the one hand, it can be investigated who participates in elections and other political events and see if there is a gender gap in political engagement and voter turnout. On the other hand, it is possible to study whether the proportion of female candidates changes or, more precisely, increases over time among all candidates. If there is a high and growing proportion of women among the candidates, it may indicate that women do have political ambition.

First, examining women's political participation, women seem to express their political opinions or participate in voting at a similar rate to men. Research suggests that while women were less likely to participate in political elections than men in the past, today, this is less and less true. In the most developed democracies, the gender ratio has even reversed (Kostelka, Blais, and Gidengil 2019). Research shows that although more men than women say they are very or somewhat interested in politics, the gap between women's and men's willingness to vote is starting to disappear even in Hungary, at least regarding participation in parliamentary elections (21 Kutatóközpont 2021). In other words, women are becoming interested and involved in politics similarly to men. However, women's political representation in the legislature is much more unequal than their propensity to express political opinions and vote.

Second, looking at the candidates running in the Hungarian elections between 1990 and 2018, the number of women running in elections rises constantly from election to election. Table 4 shows how the number of candidates and the proportion of women and men among the candidates have changed during the last nine parliamentary elections. While the number of female candidates is rising steadily, the number of male candidates is primarily stable and permanent. Just over 200 female candidates ran in the first election in 1990, while over 1300 female candidates ran for office in the 2018 elections. Meanwhile, the number of male candidates was almost 2500 in the first election in 1990, and more than 30 years later, it was just over 2600 in 2018.

Table 4 The ratio of women and men among candidates in the Hungarian parliamentary elections from 1990 to 2018

	Female candidates		Male candidates		Total number of candidates
	Number	%	Number	%	Number
1990	231	8.5%	2492	91.5%	2723
1994	278	10.0%	2489	90.0%	2767
1998	605	14.2%	3657	85.8%	4262
2002	614	17.8%	2840	82.2%	3454
2006	464	16.7%	2321	83.3%	2785
2010	506	19.8%	2050	80.2%	2556
2014	986	29.5%	2359	70.5%	3345
2018	1316	33.6%	2598	66.4%	3914

Source: Own elaboration based on data from the National Election Office and Koncz 2014

Figure 2 shows that the proportion of women among the candidates increases from election to election. There was a slight drop in 2006, but the proportion of female candidates steadily rose since the first election. This trend shows an increased number of women deciding to stand for election. Thus, it seems that it is not true that women in Hungary have no political ambition, and other explanations must be sought for the low proportion of women in parliament.

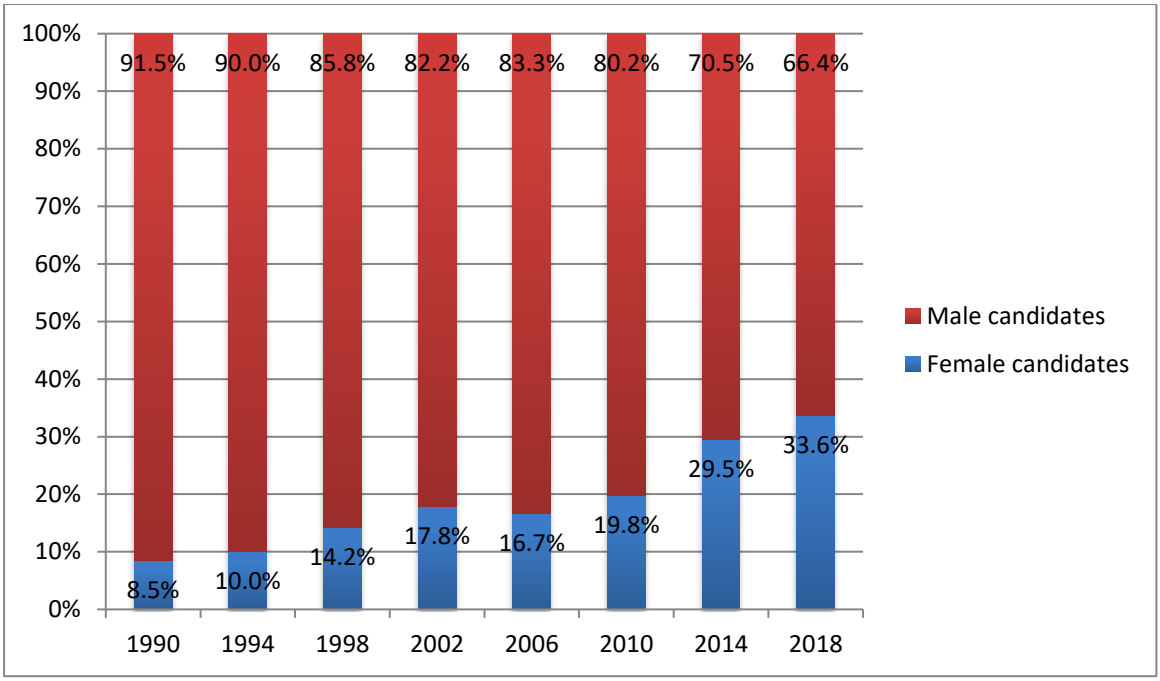

Figure 2: Proportion of female and male candidates in the elections between 1990 and 2018
Source: Own elaboration based on data from the National Election Office

Overall, the gender gap in political participation and interests is becoming less and less visible. In some cases, it is even possible to conclude that there is no significant gender gap. Moreover, there is an increasing number of female candidates in each election. Therefore, equality is slowly being achieved on the supply side, so the question remains: when will the demand for greater political representation of women increase?

2.2 Institutional Explanations – Electoral Systems

Scholars studying the representation of women in Western democracies have noted a strong relationship between electoral systems and women's political representation (see, e.g., Matland 1993, 1995; McAllister and Studlar 2002; Norris 1997; Pyeatt and Yanus 2017). There is a broad consensus in the political science literature that an electoral system can enhance or hinder the political representation of women depending on its majoritarian and proportional components. The international literature on women's political representation and electoral systems has suggested that countries with proportional representation systems (PR systems) tend to elect more women than countries with a majoritarian system (single-member district elections) (Matland 1998; Matland and Studlar 1996; Rule 1981). Some scholars have argued that single-member district elections potentially allow gender to be a more influential factor in the voting decision, which can hinder women's electoral chances (Norris 1987). In contrast, party-list elections can reduce cultural biases against women by forcing voters to vote for parties rather than individuals (Moser 2001), Moreover, some argue

that the fierce competition in single-member districts can make female candidates less willing to run for office.

Other researchers focus on the district magnitude, arguing that multi-member districts increase the number of parties and lower the electoral threshold, which offers women more opportunities to be elected (Rule 1987). Some argue (e.g., Norris 1993) that parties are making more centralized decisions at the list level, which can be an advantage for female candidates if women's representation is essential to the party. Parties can better respond to the pressure for a higher representation of women on the party list if the rules for nominating candidates are centralized, which is most often the case in proportional systems. Moreover, by placing women on party lists, parties can appeal to a much broader electorate (Matland and Studlar 1996). On the other hand, multiple parties are produced under PR systems, which provide opportunities for the emergence of women-friendly parties. According to Matland and Studlar (1996), the commitment to promote women might spread from smaller parties to larger parties. Thus, PR systems might result in more female representatives because of a contagion effect that starts with the emergence of women-friendly small parties that gain significant electoral support (Moser 2001). By contrast, in single-member districts, the role of local party organizations in selecting candidates is much more pronounced. Furthermore, gender inequalities prevail in SMDs because of incumbency advantages in districts, and the competition is fiercer as only one candidate can win (Matland and Studlar 1996; Norris 1993).

There is extensive research on the impact of Hungary's electoral system on women's parliamentary representation (e.g., Chiva 2005; Ilonszki and Montgomery 2002; Montgomery and Ilonszki 2003; Moser 2001). Hungary has a mixed-member electoral system, which means that voters can cast two separate votes simultaneously, one for a candidate in single-member districts (SMDs) and a list vote for a closed party list (Shugart and Wattenberg 2001). The Hungarian mixed-member electoral system allows us to investigate the effect of the proportional and the majoritarian tiers on women's representation while maintaining other possible cultural and socioeconomic variables. The creation of a mixed electoral system used between 1990 and 2010 resulted from a negotiated transaction in which the interests of the old and the new political elites had to be considered (Várnagy 2013). The 386 parliamentary seats were allocated through three tiers: 176 seats were distributed in *single-member districts* (SMDs), a maximum of 152 seats were allocated on *proportional party lists regionally*, and a minimum of 58 seats were allocated on the *compensatory national party list*.

While a two-round, absolute majority system was applied in the single-member districts, first, a threshold of 4 percent was applied for the party lists, which was raised to 5 percent in 1994. The electoral system was considered as being favorable to the largest parties with the winner being overrepresented in terms of mandates compared to its share of the vote (Benoit 2005).

Moser (2001) notes that, unlike the consolidated democracies, post-communist states do not experience statistically significant differences in the proportion of women elected to the legislature in the PR and SMD tiers of their mixed systems. Moser (2001) further argues that women in post-communist states do marginally better in single-member district elections than their counterparts in the West. However, they do significantly worse in PR elections. Similarly, most literature suggests that the electoral system is not a decisive factor in the Hungarian case, and it can provide only a partial explanation of why women have been underrepresented in the Hungarian parliaments ever since the first election in 1990 (Chiva 2005; Ilonszki 2012; Ilonszki and Várnagy 2007).

Ilonszki (2012) argues that the mixed electoral system worked a usual way (e.g., more women were elected from the proportional list tier than from the majoritarian tier) only in the first election in 1990. Therefore, the electoral system does not significantly affect women's representation. In the 1990 elections, 78 percent of female MPs entered parliament from the regional or list tiers (Ilonszki and Montgomery 2002). Between 1994 and 2006, this proportion fell to 67 percent, and one-third of female MPs won seats in single-member districts (Várnagy 2013). There has also been a shift from national to regional lists. According to Várnagy (2013), while in 1990, the national list was favorable to women, in the subsequent elections, most women MPs won seats on the regional list. In line with this, Moser (2001) argues that the effect of the PR tier was only marginally significant in the first election in 1990. However, by 1998, a statistically significant relationship between the electoral system and gender no longer appeared in Hungary. Montgomery and Ilonszki (2003) argue that this was due to a dramatic rise in the proportion of women elected in the SMD tier rather than any decline in women's representation in the PR tier. Moreover, the increased success of women in single-member districts was driven exclusively by the success of the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) in 1994, which had fewer women representatives elected from the party list.

Furthermore, this illustrates nicely that the electoral volatility or the success of political parties in each election can overshadow the link between the electoral system and women's representation in parliament. Although it seems that the electoral system does not play a

decisive role in women's representation in Hungary, it may still have indirect and direct effects, for example, on party organizations, party systems, or even on the motivation of candidates to run for office. The Hungarian electoral system underwent significant changes in 2011. Therefore, it is essential to describe what the electoral system was like between 1990 and 2010 and after 2010 and what impact these changes have had on women's chances of being elected to the Hungarian National Assembly.

The new electoral law was introduced in 2011, bringing many changes that may have significantly impacted the parliamentary representation of women than the electoral system used between 1990 and 2010 (see Table 5). This is because these changes in the electoral system make the role of the parties as gatekeepers even more critical. First, the new electoral law has reduced the size of parliament. Reducing the number of seats from 386 to 199 means fewer candidates can be elected, and a shrinking parliament implies an increase in intra-party competition, i.e., greater competition among incumbents and potential candidates. This, in turn, can easily lead to the de-selection of women, who have less incumbency advantage, and parties may prefer incumbents, primarily men, because they can attract more votes. Second, the allocation of mandates has changed from three tiers to two and from two rounds to one round. Previously, many candidates ran in two or even three tiers. However, there is no longer a regional list, only single-member districts, and a national party list. Therefore, a candidate's chance of getting into the parliament has also been reduced.

On the other hand, the fact that the elections in the single-member districts have become single-round elections encourages parties and political alliances to negotiate before the elections. In contrast, these negotiations and withdrawals previously took place between the two rounds. As the new distorted election system penalizes a divided opposition, the opposition parties must coordinate their candidate selection procedure before the elections (Kovarek and Littvay 2019). This coordination requires plenty of informal negotiations between parties, which is known to be disadvantageous for female candidates and women's representation. Third, the mixed-member electoral system has further strengthened the majoritarian tier. Now, 106 out of the 199 seats in the parliament can be obtained in single-member districts, meaning more representatives are elected from the majoritarian tier than from the proportional tier. In theory, this may put female candidates at a disadvantage, who are considered more likely to get elected from the proportional tier. Fourth, the remaining 93 seats are allocated on the national party list, where not only the votes of the losers are transferred but also the extra "surplus" votes not needed to win an SMD mandate. The

importance of surplus votes can motivate parties to field popular or known politicians even in safe or winnable single-member districts who can win at high margins, which can be disadvantageous for women and newcomers.

Table 5: Major Changes in Electoral Rules in 2011

Electoral rules before 2011	Electoral rules after 2011
176 SMD mandates out of 386 seats in parliament	106 SMD mandates out of 199 seats in parliament
Three tiers (SMD, regional, national)	Two tiers (SMD, national)
Non-utilized votes on the first tier: votes cast for the losing candidates (losers' compensation)	Non-utilized votes on the first tier: votes not essential to get elected (winners' compensation)
Two rounds	One round
Voters do not vote for the national party lists	Voters vote for the national party lists

Source: (Papp and Zorigt 2018)

In sum, it can be expected that the fact that the mixed-member electoral system shifted towards a majoritarian direction will negatively affect women's representation in Hungary. However, in the elections held under the new electoral law, the proportion of women has not changed significantly, falling slightly to 9.5 percent in 2014 and then rising to 12.6 percent in 2018. Moreover, women's proportion in the Hungarian legislature reached the highest rate ever in the 2018 and 2022 elections. This is particularly interesting because many changes in the electoral system lead one to assume that the position of female candidates has deteriorated even further. One reason could be that male incumbents account for most of the deselected because of the sheer numbers involved. However, the small number of women in parliament is not only a stable but also a necessary element of party politics. In other words, parties seem to have to nominate a certain number of women to satisfy voters.

2.3 Organizational Explanations – Political Parties

Among organization explanations, most research highlights that political parties play a crucial role in women's representation, especially party consolidation, party ideology, and candidate selection procedures. In this section, I also examine the impact of political parties and the interrelationship between political parties and electoral systems on women's representation in legislatures.

2.3.1 Party Consolidation

Ilonszki and Várnagy (2007) suggest that the early party consolidation and the establishment of the political elite may partially explain the low level of women's representation in Hungary and why women's representation is different compared to other post-socialist countries. According to them, two main events have occurred regarding party consolidation. In 1994, the victory of the MSZP confirmed the consolidation of the political left, and the 1998 election brought stabilization of the position of two major parties and shifted the electoral system towards a two-party system. The early consolidation of parties resulted in a closed system in which it was difficult for new actors to enter the political game. It also affected parties' selection mechanisms as independent candidates, and small parties disappeared until 2010, when two new parties entered the parliament (Várnagy and Ilonszki 2012).

On the other hand, the two parties, Fidesz and MSZP, that dominated the Hungarian party system, have also dominated the SMDs and the territorial party lists. In contrast, smaller parties could win most of their mandates only in national lists. Until 2010, a few female MSZP candidates won in single-member districts, while Fidesz has always preferred to run women on regional lists (Várnagy 2013). However, the presence of women on these lists did not translate into a high success rate for female candidates. Even though the rise of mandates won on territorial lists by the two main parties, they did not open the winnable positions to women (Várnagy 2013). The Socialist party preferred to run its favorite female politicians in more than one tier to ensure their success but did not provide more opportunities to other female candidates. At the same time, Fidesz placed only a few female candidates in winnable positions on its lists (Ilonszki and Várnagy 2007).

The fact that parties are becoming even more professional and closed seems to be accompanied by a gradual de-selection of women. On the one hand, the chances of re-election are much higher among men, and on the other hand, there is a much higher fluctuation among female politicians (Ilonszki and Várnagy 2007). However, if most women cannot remain in parliament for several terms, this will not lead to the emergence of a professional female political elite. At the same time, in 2010, some old parties, such as SZDSZ and MIÉP, ceased to exist, but two new parties, including a green party, LMP, and a far-right party, Jobbik, entered parliament. LMP was pro-women from the very beginning. Later, a few new parties were formed, one party, Párbeszéd, broke away from LMP in 2013, and two completely new centrist parties, Együtt and Momentum, were formed in 2012 and 2017. According to Caul (2001, 1218), new actors can bring new values and strategies because

newcomers are interested in attracting new voters while they do not have to be afraid of losing old voters. These new parties seemed to be indeed more open to women. Thus, a new political elite emerged on the left side of the political spectrum, promoting gender equality. However, LMP, Párbeszéd, and Együtt remained marginal parties and, therefore, have been unable to make a real difference in increasing women's representation in the legislature.

At the same time, it is worth observing how parties' attitudes towards women's stronger political representation may vary over time. In the last elections, LMP ran Erzsébet Schmuck, its female co-chair, in a single-member district, where it was known that the party had little chance of winning because, since 1998, the Fidesz candidate had won there. Furthermore, LMP did not even nominate her for a winnable position on the party list, which meant that their female co-chair was eliminated from parliament. Unfortunately, this leads to the conclusion that, although the party appeared to be pro-women after its formation, it became less and less women-friendly as it began to professionalize or when its popularity declined.

2.3.2 Party Ideology

According to Poguntke et al. (2016) parties are molded not only by their social and institutional environments but also by their ideological heritage. Chiva (2005) argues that ideological differences between parties can provide a more consistent explanation of why women have been underrepresented in politics. It is often argued that parties with leftist ideologies or green parties are more open to female candidates than parties on the right side of the ideological spectrum. Equality is essential in left-wing parties, while right-wing parties tend to believe in traditional gender roles. Previous research confirms that party ideology matters and socialist and social democratic parties tend to elect more women while right-wing parties elect fewer women to the legislatures (Norris 1985; Rule 1987). However, Moser (2001) suggests that if certain parties are more women-friendly than others, then the differences between PR or SMD tiers of a mixed system may be due to the relative success of these parties in a particular tier rather than a general promotion of women across all parties under one tier or the other. Montgomery and Ilonszki (2003) also note that under socialist governments, the number of female candidates and legislators was usually higher than under conservative governments in Hungary. Table 6 shows the major Hungarian parties in parliament and the main ideologies they fall into.

Table 6: Parties' ideological standing

Abbreviation	Full name	Ideology

DK	Demokratikus Koalíció (Demoratic Coalition)	Social liberal
Együtt	Együtt – A Korszakváltók Pártja (Together – Party for a New Era)	Liberal
Fidesz	Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége (Alliance of Young Democrats)	Nationalist/populist right
FGKP	Független Kisgazda-, Földmunkás- és Polgári Párt (The Independent Smallholrders, Agrarian Workers and Civic Party)	Agrarianist/nationalist
Jobbik	Jobbik Magyarországért (Movement for a Better Hungary)	Far-/radical right
KDNP	Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt (Christian Democratic People's Party	Christian right
LMP	Lehet Más a Politika (Politics Can Be Different)	Green
MDF	Magyar Demokrata Fórum (Hungarian Democratic Forum)	Conversative
MIÉP	Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja (Hungarian Justice and Life Party)	Nationalist/conservative
Momentum	Momentum Mozgalom (Momentum Movement)	Centrist
MSZP	Magyar Szocialista Párt (Hungarian Socialist Party)	Social democratic
P	Párbeszéd (Dialogue)	Green
SZDSZ	Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége (Alliance of Free Democracts)	Liberal

Source: Own elaboration

Tóth and Ilonszki (2015a) argue that despite the differences among parties and their approaches to gender equality, there is no significant variance regarding women's actual numeric representation. However, I would argue that there are significant differences between the parties. Table 7 shows that overall, the highest percentage of women can be found in the MSZP and LMP parliamentary groups, while there are significantly fewer women in Fidesz. The proportion of women in MSZP was above 10 percent during six periods (reaching 20 percent at its height), while in Fidesz, it was always under 10 percent. In the second and fourth parliament, it did not even reach 6 percent.

It is also clear that only one party, namely LMP tried to systemically include a high number of female MPs within its organization. LMP was the first Hungarian party to have nominated a female candidate, Bernadett Szél, for prime minister in 2018. Szél's nomination sent a strong message when the government refused to ratify the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating domestic violence against women or when there were no women ministers at all and the number of female MPs was only around 10 percent (Kovarek and Littvay 2019). LMP had the most female MPs in the Hungarian parliament because of their high commitment to gender equality and their gender quota with strict ranking rules. In the 2021 opposition primaries, another opposition party, the Democratic Coalition, nominated Klára Dobrev, a female candidate for prime minister. Although she did not win the primaries, she was relatively successful, finishing second to four other male candidates.

Table 7: Share of women MPs by political parties between 1990-2018

Party	1990	1994	1998	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
DK	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	11.1%
Fidesz	9.1%	5%	6.8%	5.5%	7.8%	8.8%	6.8%	8.5%
FKGP	6.8%	7.7%	6.3%	–	–	–	–	–
Jobbik	–	–	–	–	–	6.4%	8.7%	11.5%
KDNP	4.8%	4.5%			8.7%	5.6%	6.3%	6.3%
LMP	–	–	–	–	–	31.3%	40%	33.3%
MDF	4.8%	15.8%	5.9%	4.2%	9.1%	–	–	–
MIÉP	–	–	7.1%	–	–	–	–	–
MSZP	15.2%	10.6%	9.8%	12.9%	13.2%	8.5%	13.8%	20%
P	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	40%
SZDSZ	8.5%	15.7%	12.5%	10%	10%	–	–	–
Independent	14.3%	0%	0%	–	0%	0%	22.2%	0%

Source: Ciklustörténet, https://www.parlament.hu/web/guest/kepviselok-elozo-ciklusbeli-adatai, Retrieved: 15.05.2020.

Hungary has no legal measures to increase women's political participation, such as a legislated gender quota, because no party, regardless of ideology, supported such a law. Thus, there are no legislatively obliged gender quotas that would apply to all parties. In 2007, there was the first and most well-known attempt and debate in the parliament about introducing legislated candidate quotas, but the proposal failed (Papp 2008; Várnagy 2013). Two liberal MPs, Kata Sándor and Bálint Magyar introduced two bills to the parliament to increase women's representation in Hungary. One proposed introducing the zipper system on party lists (e.g., men and women alternate in the list) for national and local elections. The other bill proposed that 30 percent of ministers should be women. While neither law has been passed, the debate surrounding the law itself says a lot about how political elites view the role and place of women. It was clear that parties, especially the two big parties, were divided on the quota issue. Among the Socialists, many supported the bill. At the same time, most conservative politicians within parties such as Fidesz, the Christian Democrats (KDNP), MDF, and even the Liberal party (SZDSZ) disapproved of the bill.

The counterarguments were 1) the fear of token women replacing those who deserved to be in parliament on merit; 2) the right of voters to choose whom to send to parliament; 3) the issue of political culture, which cannot be changed by law, and 4) the fear that other minority groups will demand similar rights. In contrast, those politicians who favored the bill argued that the underrepresentation of women causes a democratic deficit and the

introduction of the quota to level the playing field and that the quota is the first step toward gender equality (Papp 2008). Later in 2010, there was another attempt by civil society organizations to hold a referendum on the issue of a gender quota. However, they did not collect enough signatures to call a referendum. Nevertheless, this did not necessarily mean that citizens were uninterested but that civil society could not mobilize enough due to a lack of resources. The last attempt to introduce a gender quota was in 2011, when LMP proposed a bill calling for a 33 percent gender quota on party lists. The common feature of these attempts was that they were all proposed by individual MPs who often did not even have the support of their party. At the same time, male and female politicians were not open enough to gender quotas, and grassroots citizens' and civil society initiatives were not strong enough to push for them (Várnagy 2013). The failed attempts to introduce quota laws also underline the importance of political parties and how their ideology affects whether they want to include more women in politics. Overall, increasing women's political representation may not be relevant or the most crucial issue for the parties because they do not support any initiative to increase the number of women in the legislature (Ilonszki 2012).

Regarding voluntary quotas, ideology seems to matter because only leftist, centrist or green parties have their quota regulations. Three current and former parties have voluntary party quotas in Hungary: MSZP has a 20 percent quota, and Együtt, LMP, and Párbeszéd have 50 percent quotas. Consequently, MSZP and LMP tend to have the highest share of female candidates. However, it often happens that while some parties fulfill their party quota requirements, other parties do not reach their quota requirements. For example, in the case of MSZP, there are no specific measures on the placement of candidates (e.g., ranking rule or policy). Thus the quota is often no more than a symbolic gesture. Only in the case of LMP is there a ranking rule for the list composition, which results in more women being placed on the winning positions of their party list. The weakness of the voluntary quota without ranking rules became evident in 2010 when the shrinking number of mandates in parliament undermined the political commitment to gender equality and resulted in the lowest share of female politicians ever in MSZP (Várnagy 2013).

2.3.3 Candidate Selection Procedure

According to the limited previous research on candidate selection in Hungary, it is clear that the selection procedure can explain women's under-representation and men's over-representation in politics. First, parties tend to nominate more men than women in single-member districts (SMDs). After investigating four elections between 1998 and 2010, Tóth

and Ilonszki (2015a) argue that even when parties nominate women, they nominate them in districts where the chance of winning for women is low. They note that most women candidates are nominated in less winnable districts, while parties nominate many of the men candidates in safe party districts.

Candidates nominated in safe party districts are usually prominent candidates whose election is considered necessary by the party leadership (Papp 2017, 77). Second, in line with the international literature, women occupy slightly more seats on the party list than on the majority list (Ilonszki 2012; Ilonszki and Montgomery 2002; Várnagy and Ilonszki 2012). However, they are systematically selected to lower positions on the party list (Papp 2017). Furthermore, Papp (2017) finds that besides men, experienced and younger candidates are also placed significantly higher on party lists than women. Nevertheless, the presence of women is meager at both tiers of the electoral system.

At the same time, party selectors directly influence who should be placed higher on party lists and therefore have better chances of getting elected. Thus, a candidate's position on the party list can reveal information about which candidate the party selector prioritizes. It can be seen that Hungarian political parties are placing fewer women on their party lists in "winnable" or "safe" seats. However, parties are also less likely to nominate women in single-member districts (SMDs) where they have a real chance of winning. One reason is that, except for LMP, parties that use voluntary quotas do not impose a ranking requirement for the list composition, so they are not required to have women in winnable seats on the list. Furthermore, Tóth and Ilonszki (2015a) examine multiple nominations[4] and note that fewer women than men are nominated in multiple tiers, which suggests that the chances of getting elected are entirely different for female and male candidates. As a result, women's position within parties is deteriorating.

Previous research observes the importance of informal procedures in Hungary and suggests that the candidate selection of political parties is dominated by backroom deals of politicians (Marjai 2012). The low transparency of recruitment procedures and informal negotiations between parties are disadvantageous for women, who are often left out of political bargains (Várnagy 2010, 2013). Thus, the informal procedure used by parties to nominate candidates might also be a barrier to women's political participation. However, little

[4]Some candidates are nominated in single-member districts and on the party lists. Thus the chances of getting elected are higher for candidates running in both elections.

is known about these informal dimensions of the candidate selection procedure. Previous research has not explicitly addressed how the informal procedure is reflected in the selection of party candidates and how it may affect women's representation in parliament.

Despite all the cultural, institutional, and organizational factors mentioned above, the following figure shows that female candidates are not discouraged from running for office because their share among the candidates has been rising during the last three decades. According to Figure 3, while the proportion of female candidates is noticeably higher and increasing, the share of women among legislators is steady and low over eight legislative periods between 1990 and 2018. Until 1994, the share of female candidates and legislators was coordinated. However, since the election in 1998, the two have been separated except in 2006, when the shares converged. However, from 2010, the difference has become even more remarkable. The increasing number of female candidates does not result in an increased number of female representatives in parliament. This fact makes Hungary an extreme case because the share of women nominated by parties usually strongly correlates with the women elected to the legislature (Gauja and Cross 2015).

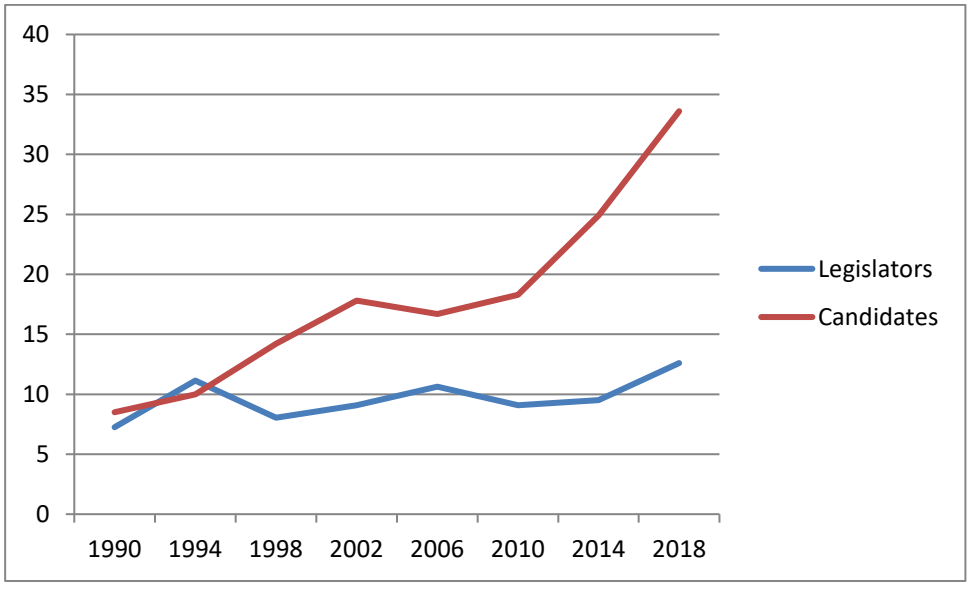

Figure 3 The proportion of women candidates and legislators in Hungary, 1990-2018
Source: Own elaboration based on data from the National Election Office

The fact that the increase in the number of female candidates does not translate into an increase in the actual representation of women indicates that women "disappear" somewhere during the candidate selection procedure. This is why the role of the parties, in particular, the selectors' role, and what exactly happens in the candidate selection procedures should be examined. I argue that the role of political parties is more important to study than other

cultural and institutional variables for several reasons. On the one hand, institutional and cultural variables are more difficult to change and influence than party variables. It is also said that achieving institutional and cultural change takes many decades. At the same time, parties are goal-oriented organizations that, if they perceive that it is in their interest to change their own party culture or their candidate selection habits, they will change them.

On the other hand, political parties influence and shape cultural and institutional variables. For example, one might think that the majoritarian tier of the electoral system creates additional barriers for women that prevent them from being elected. At the same time, the majoritarian tier is not conducive to female representation because of the parties. Because of the logic of the zero-sum game in single-member districts, parties prefer to field candidates with more electoral or parliamentary experience and better local connections (e.g., Chiru and Popescu 2017; Papp 2017). In general, male candidates tend to have these qualities. Therefore, parties choose to run male candidates in districts that are considered safe or likely to be winning for the party because they are playing it safe. However, this is entirely up to the parties; if they wanted to, they could give women the chance to stand in these districts.

Second, the literature suggests that the proportional tier is more favorable for women. However, the parties again decide to run more women on the party lists than in the SMDs, and they place women in certain positions on the lists where they have no chance of getting into parliament. Third, based on the literature, it was expected that the changes made in the electoral system in 2011 would not favor women's political representation. However, the above figure shows that the number of female MPs did not decrease during the 2014 and 2018 elections, and in the 2018 elections, the number of women MPs reached their highest level in 30 years. This also suggests that the electoral system alone does not have such a strong effect on women's representation in parliament but that parties can strengthen or weaken its impact. It seems likely that voters expect a certain number of female representatives in the parties; therefore, the shift in the electoral system towards a majoritarian tier has not further reduced the already low representation of women. In other words, parties still nominate a certain number of women to become MPs because that is what voters expect of them.

2.4 How Politicians See It

The above explanations provide an academic response to women's political representation in Hungary. However, this section tries to understand the causes of women's underrepresentation in Hungarian politics but approaches it from a unique perspective. Little

is known about what political parties and their politicians think about the reasons for women's representation and whether politicians make similar or different arguments to those suggested by the literature on women's political representation. In this section, I argue that one needs to understand the perception of party officials since, according to the existing literature, they are the ones who put obstacles in the way of female politicians. Thus, I supplement the findings of the above literature with the results of the qualitative interviews.

To the best of my knowledge, there have been only two previous studies on women's representation in Hungary that relied on some interviews with politicians (see Galligan and Clavero 2008; Ilonszki and Montgomery 2002). However, in these studies, only female politicians were interviewed, even though most party selectors and officials were men. In contrast, I argue that one needs to include men's views when understanding male dominance and women's under-representation in politics. Thus, I believe this is the first qualitative analysis that provides the perception of politicians regarding women's representation in Hungary.

In this section, I discuss the results of the interviews conducted with candidates, MPs, and selectors of political parties since political actors involved in distinct levels of politics may provide different views. The section aims to show the perception and motivation of both female and male politicians regarding women's representation in Hungary. The empirical body of the chapter offers four structural explanations for women's underrepresentation in politics: the role of party-selectors and intra-party networks, tone of politics, traditional gender roles, and parliament as a gendered workplace, which makes it difficult for women with children to reconcile work and private life.

2.4.1 The Role of Party Selectors and Their Biases

The respondents confirm the literature's suggestion that political parties play a crucial role in women's low presence in politics in Hungary. According to one female politician, there is almost no difference between parties regarding women's political representation. Still, she is a little more optimistic about parties with younger politicians. In the words of a politician:

> "All political parties are closed on the issue of women. We are now seeing a change of attitude in Momentum and the younger parties, and the next generation could bring changes. The current political public life is pushing people away from taking on political roles." (Hanna, MSZP)

Several politicians have expressed that current politics is characterized by incredible infighting within parties, resulting in a shortage of women. In their words:

> "It is a fight or death situation in parliament when you consider that a party has ten to fifteen seats that it can win. Maybe that is why men are closing ranks." (Kata, DK)

> "As far as I can see, the nature of politics is a constant fight and a constant struggle. It is a very soul-crushing thing that one must constantly fight, even with allies with whom one sits in the same party. This environment is not about cooperation but always trying to take someone's place. There is much less need for rotation and competition in a normal workplace. This world is even more daunting for women, who I think are less competitive. I understand; it is not a friendly environment." (Ádám, Momentum)

Many interviewees suggest that women's underrepresentation is partly due to party selectors' biases towards female candidates and partly due to the candidate selection procedures of the parties in general. However, the biases are not always or necessarily conscious or directly discriminatory against women. Often, selectors have unconscious prejudices or biases that influence their behavior. According to a female respondent:

> "When people must think of candidates, they just imagine men with ties. This is in their mind." (Bella, Párbeszéd)

This quotation confirms that selectors often do not intentionally discriminate against women and favor men. Instead, it shows that people have hidden prejudices and that it is more common to see men as candidates. People associate men most often with candidates. For this reason, it is essential for party leaders to be aware of their prejudices. In any case, if there are more women among the candidates and representatives, likely, people will more often see women as the ideal candidates. According to another politician, only people with certain qualities enter politics, and women are less ambitious because they think they are not cut out for it. However, party leaders can influence which candidates they present as ideal. In his words:

> "There is not enough pool of women to choose from. Politics, as such, attracts men more because everyone assumes that a man is more likely to have political skills. Very competitive people want to put themselves first, which is true of all parties. I, for my part, believe that the skills that attract people into politics are the wrong ones, and we need a different political culture." (Ádám, Momentum)

However, other respondents suggest that due to existing gender stereotypes, selectors sometimes intentionally favor male against female candidates. According to a female respondent, party selectors continue to select men over women because they think that the nomination of a woman would put them in a disadvantaged position at the election. At the same time, she stressed that she believes that these prejudices no longer have any basis and are not valid. In her words:

> "Women's representation in politics in Hungary is pyramid-shaped, so most women in politics are found among the mayors of the villages. One-third of the mayors in villages are women, and as we move up, women are disappearing in the parliament and the government. Many people say that this is because of social prejudice. I do not think so. Today, society is more mature than the political parties themselves. Parties are afraid that they will be less accepted in society if they choose female candidates, but this is not true. For example, there was a debate in the parliament about gender quotas on the candidate lists. One party surveyed to discover what people think of the quotas, and it turned out that most of the respondents supported the quota initiative. However, the bill still was not accepted by the parliament. No research shows voters are less likely to elect a female candidate than a male one. So, this is a misperception of the political elite about voters' attitudes towards female candidates." (Mónika, MSZP)

Kinga Göncz, a former foreign minister under the socialist government, also argued in another study: "the current government [Fidesz-KDNP] and the political discussion represent a more traditional and hostile attitude towards women than the society."[5] Interestingly, a male respondent from the ruling right-wing party put forward a similar argument. From the perspective of this male politician:

> "Women are more accepted in society; they hold more leadership positions outside the political realm than in politics. In this sense, the political realm is far more conservative than society." (Attila, Fidesz)

According to another politician, the party's leadership is responsible for the lack of women in Fidesz. It is the party leaders themselves who are not open to women.

> "In my opinion, the reason why there are no women in Fidesz is not just because Orbán thinks they cannot handle the workload, which is certainly not true. However, because they cannot fit women politicians into their world view." (Kata, DK)

[5] http://4liberty.eu/women-in-politics-hungarian-attitudes-they-are-achangin/

2.4.2 The Tone of Politics and Traditional Gender Stereotypes

There was a consensus among the respondents that the tone of Hungarian politics has changed in recent years, and politics has become a battlefield. Many respondents believed that this is one of the reasons why few women are in politics, suggesting that women and men deal with this in diverse ways. In the words of a female and a male respondent:

> "Women often stop in the public sphere at the level of municipal representatives or, for example, they became mayors. However, being on the top [national politics] requires different skills, and the dynamic is quite different between local and national politics. It is not easy to fight your way there [national politics]. Politics is filthy. It is a tough profession, and very few women take it on." (Nóra, MSZP)

> "Hungarian politics is difficult. The socialization of women and the gender roles assigned to them are a disadvantage in politics. However, this is also a handicap in multinational companies, where women receive a lower salary and are not treated the same way [as men]. Politics is a macho thing. It needs a tough political performance, which manifests in how hard one can put up and fight with others. Women are obviously at a disadvantage in this. It is not the strength of female politicians to bite someone's head. Their [women's] strength is that they can see different points of view, they can bring in various aspects, and they can identify themselves with voters and problems much better [than men]." (András, P)

Some of the respondents suggested that women are more sensitive than men. Therefore, it is harder for them to perform in this warlike milieu. A female respondent mentioned a former statement from the Prime Minister, Orbán Viktor, and she added:

> "The Prime Minister said that women cannot accept the rude style that characterizes politics because they are too sensitive. Therefore, women are not in politics. However, there is no need to speak in a rude style." (Mónika, MSZP).

Other interviewees mentioned the fact that the tone of public life has become rude and hostile. However, Monica's quote highlights that politics should not be so hostile. So, it is a question of why this situation is taken for granted and why politicians do not want to change it when they seem to be unanimous in finding the tone of politics wrong. The statement mentioned above from the Prime Minister was recorded in a private and informal meeting, where he was asked why there is no woman in the current government, and he answered the following way:

> "I remember what poor Mónika Lamberth [a former minister under Socialist governments] got [from us]. Although we were more civilized people in our view when we were in opposition [in the parliament], even there, I still remember a few things from our side. Hungarian politics is based on constant character assassination, creating difficult situations that must be endured, but women cannot stand this. I cannot even imagine a female minister in the current circumstances."[6]

The Prime Minister did not specify what he meant by a few things, but he most probably referred to the verbal abuse of Mónika Lamberth. However, his argument is interesting because it implies two things. First, the party selectors might not select women because of their alleged sensitiveness. Selectors might think that women are not suitable for politics. For example, this could be the case of Orbán Viktor and his party (Fidesz) because he argues with conviction that women cannot tolerate the brutality of politics. Second, women might not aspire to political office because of the tone of politics. Male respondents also made similar arguments about women's alleged sensitivity and how this might affect women's political ambition and their chances of becoming candidates. In their words:

> "There are women who do not work with someone or do not seek the nomination of people who have once hurt them or made sexist comments sometimes. However, someone cannot be a candidate if one does not accept a nomination from those with whom they had a conflict. This is not the case for men. He will negotiate with anyone if it is in a man's interest. Men can handle and get over conflicts faster. Women do politics based on values, which is noble, but nobility is not efficient in politics. In politics, someone must build coalitions." (Péter, P)

Nevertheless, the tone of politics affects men and women, even if men are less likely to talk about it. The following quote confirms this from Dániel:

> The political culture, the dirty politics scare women away, especially in recent years. It also scares men away, but they are more tolerant than women. Ladies are more sensitive than men, and it is difficult for them to tolerate it. My mother always says that she would not be able to endure the filth and lies they [he referred to politics in general] constantly do with us. My sister says the same thing. It, of course, bothers and indisposes me too, but I somehow try to make sure it does not break my dynamism, and the male and female soul may be different in this." (Dániel, Jobbik)

[6] https://444.hu/2015/10/06/orban-elarulta-miert-nincsenek-nok-a-magyar-politika-legfelso-szintjein

This quote is also interesting because, although Daniel admits that he is bothered by the filth of politics, he says it affects him as a man less than a woman. The view that women are sensitive was a standard answer among male selectors. Although some female respondents also mentioned the tone of politics, they highlighted other factors as being more influential on women's representation. Thus, party ideology is less salient, but there is a clear gender difference between the perception of female and male politicians. Female respondents often reported the opposite of women's sensitivity. They tended to confirm that men see women as sensitive people, while women, at least in politics, are much more brutal and do not take everything personally. For example, one of the women respondents shared a personal anecdote showing that men think that she and women, in general, are more sensitive and should be treated differently than men. In contrast, she does not think she is any more sensitive than a man.

> "Once, there was a heated debate in the morning between some external communication experts and us [politicians]. However, it was not that fierce. The same afternoon, I received a call from one of the male communication experts, who asked if he had hurt me in the morning. I knew he just wanted to be nice, but he would not have called a male politician to ask if he had hurt them. This call also indirectly demonstrates that men feel like they must call a woman to see if they are hurt, even though I was not even hurt as it is a natural thing that there are disputes among people." (Diána, Jobbik)

Another female respondent told a story about a press breakfast, which became a clash between her and a right-wing journalist. When describing the interaction between the two, she repeatedly used the word 'clash' and compared the situation to a judo match. In her words:

> "The journalist said very harsh things. I felt the need to speak up, and I tell you seriously, it was like judo players when they clash, their bodies first touch each other, and their full muscles tense. I experienced this feeling during the clash with this journalist. Nevertheless, it is bad that the public sphere is such a cage fight." (Barbara, Liberálisok)

Although this conflict seemed to be a real clash, Barbara explained that she was not very concerned about it. Similarly, she encounters many smear campaigns, which she said bother people in general, but stressed that men are just as bothered by them as women. Barbara's and Diána's cases show that the tone of politics or women's alleged sensitivity does not affect women to the same extent as male politicians would think. It seems clear from the

interviewees' responses that traditional gender stereotypes strongly prevail among politicians, especially male politicians. Accordingly, women are seen as more sensitive and less militant. The same stereotypical belief is more likely to present men as more suitable for political life because politics is often seen as a battlefield. However, it is essential to realize that, according to the interviewees, the tone of the political debate in Hungary has become more hostile and less respectful over the last few years. As a result, female and male aspirants and candidates who are afraid of or less able to cope with conflict can suffer.

2.4.3 Parliament as a Gendered Workplace

The reconciliation of work and family life is a challenge for women in politics, especially for women with small children, while it does not seem to affect male politicians. According to several respondents, this is one of the main reasons there are fewer female politicians than male politicians in parliament. The interviews suggest that childcare and household responsibilities are disproportionately shared between men and women because these tasks are still considered women's responsibilities in Hungarian society. It is not a surprise because, in Hungary, most families have a traditional division of labor, with women generally doing more childcare and men doing more money-earning activities. However, this often harms the labor market situation for women with children. In the words of a respondent:

> "Hungary is a very patriarchal country; for example, women are expected not to leave their sick child at home. It is a basic expectation of women. However, I think the basic expectation should be that a sick child does not stay at home alone. It should be a different question which parent stays with the child." (Bella, P)

It, therefore, seems to be a challenge for women to reconcile family and work life in general and in politics in particular. The respondents emphasized that it is even more difficult for women in politics for distinct reasons. First, politics is a job where working time and conditions are not family-friendly. Thus, it makes it harder for female politicians in politics, as they need to make serious adjustments. Second, some women are aware of the sacrifices this job requires. Thus it may affect women's ambitions even to seek a political career.

On the other hand, women have much less time and opportunity to participate in formal and informal meetings due to their family responsibilities. This expectation that women's place is in the family is further reinforced by the current government's family policy, in which women are almost exclusively portrayed as mothers. Third, male selectors often argue that politics or parliamentary work is not for women, especially for those women who

have families and kids. Thus, party gatekeepers might think that women could not fulfill their duties as politicians because of their responsibilities at home, so they might not select them as candidates or nominate them for winnable positions. One of the interviewees recalled a story about her female party member to illustrate how difficult it is for female politicians to be both mothers and politicians at home and work. In her words:

> "Once this female politician's child had a tonsillectomy, and it happened on a voting day when our party had a very calculated [minor] majority. Thus, the party needed her to come in [to the parliament] to vote. She came to vote, ran back to the hospital, waited until her kid was in the operating room, then came back again to the parliament to vote, and then went back again to the hospital." (Mónika, MSZP)

This quote also suggests that it is not only about being a woman that puts someone in a disadvantageous position but more about being a mother. While women must meet social and family expectations, family life seems incompatible with parliamentary work. According to two female respondents:

> "Parliamentary politics, politics in general, and a large part of these activities are happening in the evenings. One must make public forums when people are not busy and are usually free in the evenings. Furthermore, this is not easy for women with small children due to family division of labor, which is not even for men and women." (Mónika, MSZP)

> "It is difficult to be a first-line politician when someone has three children and family. Politics means exclusivity. It requires much preparation. One must work and be available twenty-four hours per day." (Anna, DK)

It is interesting to note that due to the traditional gender stereotypes, it is expected for female politicians to spend time with their children and family. However, it is not expected for male politicians to do the same. While male politicians with children can rely heavily on their wives, this is not true for female politicians who are mothers and wives simultaneously. The situation for female and male politicians with children seems completely different. In the words of a female respondent:

> "What is the most difficult for women who have already entered the political realm as I did is that my life, especially my private life is completely different from men's in politics. The fact that someone is a mother or a father is completely different. Men

who enter usually do not have small children, or if they have, then their wife stays home with their children." (Diána, Jobbik)

Diána argued that male politicians do not realize how women must reconcile and manage their family and work life. To highlight women's efforts, she decided to post more personal stories on social media, for example, on motherhood. According to her:

"There is no close personal relationship between male and female politicians. Thus, I cannot tell my male counterparts in person that, for example, I am here today with nice hair and full make-up on, prepared for the meeting, but my child vomited ten times during the evening. There is 'no discrimination against women, and of course, there are possibilities for women.' However, everyone expects women to be as prepared and good as their male colleagues, even though their child vomited ten times during the evening. It is just expected of the women to take care of their children. [The last sentence was said sarcastically]." (Diána, Jobbik)

Diána's case highlights the double standards that women face. However, contrary to Diána's belief, some male respondents, including her party counterparts, also seem to realize female politicians' difficulties. Nevertheless, male politicians sometimes perpetuate the existing gender stereotypes and expectations of women and mothers. In the words of male politicians:

"Men can better adapt to the work of a representative than women who have children and other family responsibilities. Today a man can better adapt to this. I can see that it is hard for women to be everywhere, to arrive at every meeting in time, while they also need to bring their children to school and other extracurricular activities. The children can get sick as well. A mother is more attached to her children while a father and men, in general, can solve these in diverse ways." (Dániel, Jobbik)

"Women's low proportion in politics has social roots. It is also because of family formation. Women spend more time with their family and children when they start a family, as women need to raise and take care of the children for a while. However, men also take parental leave these days." (Péter, P)

These quotes confirm that men also believe women are responsible for raising and caring for children. Peter specifically states that women should raise and take care of children. However, some respondents argue that women can cope with these tasks and expectations. A female respondent – who also complained about the working hours in politics – argued that women could successfully coordinate work and family life even though it is not easy.

> "Politics does not care about families, and because we are women, we can solve everything. We are accustomed to solving things so that I can solve them. I can manage my work and family life. However, I do not know if I should be proud of this. I feel that my health and family could suffer because I try to solve everything alone. It would be good if everyone realizes that some people have a family so work requests would not misuse their weekends, nights, and holidays." (Bella, P)

However, some interviewees explicitly emphasized that male selectors are still reluctant to allow women to enter politics because they feel they are not as committed as men. However, it also emerged that women seem less competent than men mainly because of their motherhood. In the words of a respondent:

> "Parties believe that the duties of women would not allow them to be politicians. However, women are the ones who should decide whether they want to be and would be able to become a politician, not the parties." (Mónika, MSZP)

Monica's argument refers to "the motherhood penalty," a sociological term. This term describes the career problems women face after having children. As a result, for example, mothers are perceived as less productive based on biased stereotypical views of mothers. The motherhood penalty impacts wages, hiring opportunities, appraisals, and promotions. It may also lead male politicians and selectors to think that women are less qualified to be politicians than men. However, as Mónika suggests, the selectors themselves and the way they think about women need to change.

2.5 How Aspirants See It

In this section, I show the perception of the aspirants regarding women's under-representation in politics. Identifying aspirants in the candidate selection procedure is challenging because parties usually only reveal who they are once they are already considered candidates. However, I had the opportunity to survey the Horizont Political School for Women participants, a specific program designed for women aspirants by the Indítsuk be Magyarországot Foundation. Since most respondents said they applied for this program because they wanted to get involved in politics, I argue that they can be considered aspirants. As the supply side may also contribute to the under-representation of women in politics, it might be relevant to know what the aspirants think is the reason for the low political representation of women.

Although the survey contained many questions, in this section, I only analyzed the answers to two open-ended questions that aimed to understand the aspirants' perception of the barrier to women's political representation. Among the domestic reasons, many argued that Hungary's prevailing traditional culture, old and wrong customs, and social structure are the biggest obstacles to women. In the words of two aspirants:

> "There is a condescending, patronizing style, and women have no place beyond the kitchen attitude."

> "Atavistic social arrangements and the emphasis on unconventional gender roles in public life."

These quotes illustrate how gender roles are strongly present in the Hungarian culture. The problem with gender roles is that they might negatively influence women's motivation to participate in politics and selector's attitudes towards women. Furthermore, the societal expectations and perceptions of women and men can manifest in concrete discrimination and prejudice against women.

> "Women are treated as second-class citizens in Hungary today, in all fields, not just politics."

According to respondents, supply-side explanations are also responsible for the low proportion of women in politics. In other words, they suggest that women are afraid to get involved in politics because of their low self-esteem. However, these supply-side explanations may also result from the dominant gender expectations in society. After all, gender roles, as mediated by society and culture, influence self-esteem. In the words of two respondents:

> "Fixed gender roles and the resulting imposter syndrome."

> "Women also find it difficult to find jobs in other, similarly masculine, often described as crude professions. Often, I think, women do not believe what they are capable of and do not get any real encouragement or support from the men in the position (who are overwhelmingly male)."

The first answer suggests a strong link between societal gender expectations and women's self-confidence. Women may consider themselves less suited to a career in politics because society tends to see politics as a male domain. However, the second quote confirms how much it matters if people in positions of power, especially men, support and encourage

women to assert themselves in politics. The interviewees also confirmed that women are less inclined to engage in politics independently. However, women can advance their political careers if supported and motivated to participate in politics. Many women said they had taken up political positions because someone had encouraged them. However, women who lack character or self-confidence are quickly suppressed in politics, according to one respondent:

> "Women who lack character and character are oppressed and cannot assert themselves, and women who have those qualities do not want to be in politics."

On the supply side, the lack of time was also highlighted, with one respondent saying it is challenging to balance the triple burden of family, career, and politics. In the former section, interviews with politicians reported similar experiences.

I also asked the aspirants whether they think it is easier or more challenging for a woman to succeed in politics than a man. There seemed to be a consensus that it is harder for women to succeed in politics than men. I asked them why, and they almost unanimously agreed that it was due to the Hungarian social structure. Respondents see Hungarian society as highly patriarchal, believing this is the main obstacle to women's political empowerment.

> "Men do not see women as equal partners."

> "Women in Hungary are still not considered by society to be equal to men."

> "Women's thoughts and comments are taken less seriously, especially young ones."

> "Most people still do not see women as leaders."

These responses suggest that women, especially young women, feel that they are not considered by society to be equal to men, nor are they seen as leaders. Women believe that society's perception of them makes it harder for women than men in politics. This is compounded by the fact that many in society see politics as more of a male preserve. In the words of the respondents:

> "The public sees politics as a playground for men."

> "Politics is still perceived by many as a male arena, which is not for women. Many women internalize this (I do too), and it is tough to 'teach' it out of ourselves."

> "Society is traditional, and people prefer the familiar things such as 'politics is a man's idol.'"

These quotes suggest that it has become so commonplace in society that there have always been more men in politics that many people cannot imagine anything else. One of the problems with society's association of politics with men is that women themselves often internalize this. In other words, this impacts whether or not women dare to enter politics. On the other hand, society often determines where women belong. As two respondents put it:

> "The Hungarian society is patriarchal, and people trust men. Women have their place in the kitchen."

> "There is a general perception that a woman's place is with her family, while fighting and politics is a man's job."

However, there was also a slightly different response, in which someone highlighted the lack of female role models:

> "As the majority of Hungarians are characterized by political apathy, there are very few female politicians who serve as role models."

Last but not least, one respondent pointed out that women are sometimes more successful in politics than men. According to the respondent, the reason for this is that there are inherently few women, especially on the front line. In other words, it makes it easier for women to stand out.

Overall, women aspirants in the survey typically highlighted the traditional social structure as a reason for the low political representation of women in Hungary. According to them, the prevailing view in society is that politics is the domain of men. Women's perception is that society does not consider women as good politicians or leaders as men. These attitudes, in turn, affect women's self-confidence and women's political motivation. Only a small proportion of respondents to the questionnaire are already involved in politics, but the majority are only just planning to get involved. This may explain why they are less likely to report barriers to women's political participation related to political parties or the inner workings of politics. They, therefore, tended to reflect on social problems that are more general and visible to all.

2.6 Discussion

As Várnagy (2013, 3) argues, women's under-representation in Hungary has become "the most stable feature of the post-communist political system, resisting government changes, the transformation of the party system, and the recent constitutional reform." Previous studies

(Ilonszki and Montgomery 2002; Montgomery and Ilonszki 2016; Papp 2017; Tóth and Ilonszki 2015a; Várnagy and Ilonszki 2012) suggest that the under-representation of women in the Hungarian parliament is the result of a combination of cultural, institutional and political factors. Although much research has been done in Hungary, most focused on well-established causes such as electoral systems or cultural variables. The problem with these variables is that they are not easy to change or intervene. In other words, these variables cannot solve the problem of women's representation in parliament. Because the proportion of women in Hungary has stagnated for a long time, some direct intervention is needed. It seems that the higher representation of women could be achieved much easier and quicker through political parties.

In addition, there is a gap in the current literature because the political actors were not asked about the reasons for the low political representation of women. However, in terms of intervention, it can be essential to understand what political actors see or think about the reasons for women's low political participation. I have tried to remedy this in this chapter by supplementing the explanations given in the previous literature with interviews with politicians about the reasons for women's under-representation in politics.

The respondents I interviewed identify somewhat different and specific obstacles to women's low political representation. According to the interviewees, there are three main reasons for women's low political participation: party selectors and their biases, the tone of politics and traditional gender stereotypes, and parliament as a gendered workplace. The tone of politics and traditional gender stereotypes, which do not promote women in politics, are difficult to change because they are cultural variables that take time to change. Nevertheless, changing how parliament and political parties operate seems as an achievable goal.

The interviewees suggest that political parties are gendered institutions that offer different opportunities for male and female politicians. The role of selectors and their biases in the candidate selection procedure was specifically mentioned in the context of the low political representation of women. According to the respondents, political life in general and the candidate selection procedure, in particular, has many formal and informal dimensions, which should be examined together. For this reason, it is worth focusing on the candidate selection procedure. Both the literature and interviews suggest that it may play the most significant role in hindering or enabling women's political representation.

Moreover, candidate selection seems to be a procedure in which it is relatively easy to make policy-oriented interventions and see immediate changes. Therefore, in the following chapters, I will analyze the impact of the political parties' candidate selection procedure on women's representation from different perspectives. While formal rules are easier to study quantitatively, informal rules must be qualitatively studied. This is why the following chapters will be based on mixed-methods research. In other words, I investigate the research questions both quantitatively and qualitatively.

3 Chapter: Candidate Selection Procedures and Women's Representation

This chapter focuses on one main organizational aspect of political parties: the candidate selection procedure. Previous research suggests that often seemingly gender-neutral candidate selection criteria set up by the party rules may have unintended gendered consequences (see e.g., Bjarnegård and Kenny 2016; Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2016, 2017). I investigate the impact of the different party nomination rules on the proportion of women candidates and the proportion of women representatives elected by the parties. The chapter aims to understand which candidate selection procedures are conducive to women's political representation. Specifically, I analyze the parties' candidate selection procedures according to the following aspects: *centralization vs. decentralization*, *exclusiveness vs. inclusiveness,* or *institutionalization vs. non-institutionalization*.

In gender and politics research, the role of political parties has previously been described as the 'missing variable' that may explain the reasons for women's political representation (Baer 1993; Lovenduski 2011). Recent studies emphasize the role of political parties, with a particular focus on aspects of candidate selection in the political representation of women (Cheng and Tavits 2011; Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2008; Gauja and Cross 2015; Hinojosa 2012; Johnson 2016; Krook 2010a; Matthews 2014; Murray 2010; Piscopo 2016; Pruysers et al. 2017). However, the intra-party mechanisms explaining variation in the number of female candidates selected and representatives elected are still largely unexplored. The lack of adequate large-scale data at the party level containing information on internal structures has made it difficult to investigate the effect of party-level variables on women's political representation (Kunovich and Paxton 2005).

To examine which candidate selection procedure affects the proportion of female candidates and representatives the most, I use a unique party-level data covering over 140 parties from 25 countries. For each of the parties, the data include information from the Political Party Database Project (PPDB) about issues such as the number of women among the candidates, the number of women on the candidate lists, the number of women elected, how candidates are de facto selected, party ideology, gender rules used for selecting candidates, and whether there are women's sub-organizations.

This chapter contributes to the literature in two important ways. First, it focuses on cross-party differences; therefore, I use parties as units of analysis rather than countries.

Second, while most previous studies examine the variation in the number of female representatives elected, this chapter focuses also on the variation in the number of female candidates nominated by parties. Research on candidates is still rare because it is difficult to capture data at the candidate level. Thus, this chapter offers a large comparative study based on a lower unit of analysis than most previous studies. In addition, differences between candidates can be examined, as separate data are available for the total number of female candidates (which includes candidates running in electoral districts and candidates running on party lists) and for female candidates only running on the party list. Previous research suggests that female candidates have a better chance of getting into parliament on party lists than single-member districts (Chiru and Popescu 2017; Ragauskas and Thames 2020). In other words, there might be differences in parties' candidate selection procedure between the two tiers of electoral systems. That is why it is worth looking at them separately.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. I first present the theoretical framework and hypotheses. I then describe the data and variables in more detail. Finally, I present the analysis and findings, followed by a discussion.

3.1 Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Despite earlier theories about the decline of political parties, parties remain the most critical actors in democratic politics (Mair 1997a). As Sartori (1976, 64) argues, "*a party is any political group that presents at elections and is capable of placing candidates for public office.*" Moreover, Sartori (2005) notes that the candidate selection procedure is one of the parties' defining functions. It is within the internal competence of the parties to decide which candidates they should nominate and who is eligible to hold public office. Katz and Mair (1993) also emphasize that office-seeking behavior is an essential feature of politicians and parties. Katz (2001) points out that the role of the candidate selection and nomination procedure is important for many reasons. First, the nomination of candidates and their delegations to parliament distinguishes parties from other interest groups. These candidates are the public faces of the parties and represent, among other factors, the parties' ideological, sociological, demographic, and geographical identities. It is, therefore, vital which candidates the parties put forward through the selection and nomination procedure. Second, the outcome of the candidate selection procedure, together with the will of the voters, decides in an election the composition of the legislative body, what kind of representatives will be there, and what issues they will deal with in their legislative work.

The comparative study of political parties and their organizational differences has a long history and has been explored by many researchers such as Duverger (1959), Kirchheimer (1966) and Neumann (1954). For my dissertation in general and this chapter in particular, I am interested in research on the organizations of political parties. Much of this research relies on party statutes and official documents for evidence about party structures and is sometimes complemented with expert judgments about how parties work (Poguntke et al. 2016). This chapter draws on three previous major studies on party organizations. Firstly, Kenneth Janda's pioneering study of party organization and practices in 53 countries needs to be mentioned (Janda 1980). Secondly, this dissertation was inspired by Katz and Mair's handbook on party organizations, which included inter-party and longitudinal data from 12 countries (Katz and Mair 1992). Poguntke et al. (2016) have recently collected information on party rules and resources in several countries, and I used this database in this chapter.

There is a remarkable uniformity regarding the core architecture of party organizations, for example, declining membership, enhanced financial resources, and more paid staff (Poguntke et al. 2016). At the same time, however, there are substantial variations between countries and party families regarding their internal procedures, how internally democratic they are, and the forms this democratization takes (see Poguntke et al. 2016). Other research also confirms that political parties are heterogeneous and differ in organizational culture, political ideology, political culture, and candidate selection procedures (e.g., Escobar-Lemmon and Taylor-Robinson 2008; Wolchik and Chiva 2021). More specifically, as Caul (1999, 80) argues, 'parties differ in the number of women they nominate, where they rank women on party lists and the proportion of women they send to parliament'. Therefore, I assume that parties differ in their commitment to women's representation and the opportunities they provide for women to run for office as candidates and be elected representatives in the legislature.

Previous research suggests that political parties' role is crucial to understanding male overrepresentation and female underrepresentation in politics (Kenny 2013; Kittilson 2006; Lovenduski 2005). However, it is only recently that researchers have begun to investigate the impact of candidate selection on women's political representation. To understand the importance of candidate selection, one needs to consider electoral rules to distribute seats among parties and candidate selection as the primary determinant of intra-party mandate allocation (Atmor, Hazan, and Rahat 2011, 32). To be elected to parliament, one first needs to be selected as a candidate of a specific party.

In many cases, the decision about which candidate will ultimately win a seat is decided at the candidate selection stage, and it is not for the voters to decide. Pesonen (1968: 348) argues, *"the nomination stage eliminates 99.96 percent of all the eligible people. The voters choose from only 0.04 percent."* This is especially true in proportional systems with closed lists and majoritarian systems with safe seats, where voters may only choose between candidates previously selected by their party (Duverger 1959). Under such conditions, candidates placed high on party lists and those nominated in safe ('winnable') districts are highly likely to be elected irrespective of their personal attributes (Papp and Zorigt 2016). In these cases, therefore, the election of candidates depends on whoever decides on the selection. However, even in open and semi-open list systems, how parties rank candidates on the ballot has a significant and deterministic effect on the proportion of women among those elected (Kunovich 2003; Millard, Popescu, and Tóka 2011). Thus, parties not only have a specific role in candidates' initial nomination, but they also control some aspects of electing women by placing them in winnable districts or at the top of party lists (Pruysers et al. 2017). Therefore, I am interested in analyzing the variation in the number of women candidates nominated and the variation in the number of women representatives elected.

To understand the impact of candidate selection on women's descriptive representation, one needs to examine how parties are organized with respect to candidate selection. The selection procedure can be analyzed regarding how and where it takes place in practice (Field and Siavelis 2008; Rahat and Hazan 2001). Various aspects of candidate selection may potentially impact women's proportion among the candidates and representatives, such as the level of decision-making (centralized vs. decentralized), the inclusiveness of the selectors or the institutionalization of the candidate selection procedures (Hinojosa 2012; Norris and Lovenduski 1995). In this chapter, I focus on these aspects that are commonly referred to as the most crucial aspects of the candidate selection procedure. I also focus on these aspects because they are general variables and make it possible to compare them within parties and countries. Moreover, if necessary, they seem easy to change in terms of policy intervention. Centralization and exclusiveness focus on the content of the procedure, while institutionalization concerns its form and refers to the formal framework of candidate selection (Field and Siavelis 2008; Norris 1996b).

This chapter builds on two previous studies examining the impact of parties' candidate selection on women's political representation. Examining the impact of candidate selection methods, Pruysers et al. (2017) find that centralization and inclusiveness are positively

associated with women's higher representation. However, their significance is lost when system-level variables are included in the model. On the other hand, Bjarnegård and Zetterberg (2016) find that institutionalized candidate selection positively affects women's political representation when it is simultaneously used with gender quotas. While the first study focused only on the centralization and exclusiveness of the candidate selection procedure, the second focused on the institutionalization of candidate selection. These three dimensions seem to be the essential variables when examining the candidate selection procedure (Field and Siavelis 2008; Hazan and Rahat 2010; Rahat 2007; Rahat and Hazan 2001). Thus, in this chapter, I examine all three of their and their effects on women's representation.

The level of centralization in the candidate selection procedure has been identified as a significant factor in explaining differences in women's numeric representation in politics (see, e.g., (Caul 1999; Kenny and Verge 2013; Krook 2010; Matland and Studlar 1996; Vandeleene 2014). Centralization and decentralization of the candidate selection procedure can be understood in two ways. Functional centralization refers to the involvement of distinct groups such as trade unions, women, and minorities, while territorial centralization describes the level of decision-making (national versus local levels). The higher the territorial level at which the decision is made, and the fewer functional party groups involved, the more centralized the procedure (Papp and Zorigt 2016). Concerning the connection between centralization and women's candidacy, previous research findings are inconclusive. Bjarnegård and Kenny (2016, 373) argue that the reasons for these inconclusive accounts are that, on the one hand, studies often do not understand centralization in the same way. On the other hand, formal rules do not always correspond to informal practices. While some studies suggest that decentralized selection can favor women at the grassroots level (Norris 1997b; Norris and Lovenduski 1993), decentralized rules may favor other candidate qualities, such as local ties over gender. Candidates with local political backgrounds and networks can be expected to benefit if the selection happens at the local level. Kittilson (2006) suggests that decentralized selectors are less capable of considering decisions and aspects made outside their electoral district. Thus, they make their own decisions in isolation, without considering, for example, gender representational outcomes.

Furthermore, Caul (1999, 81) suggests that in a decentralized candidate selection procedure, women must simultaneously pressure each party member individually. In contrast, a centralized candidate selection procedure makes it easier for them by having a

single target for their demands. Furthermore, the centralized selection gives party elites more power to implement and enforce gender equality measures (Murray 2010; Norris and Lovenduski 1993). However, this is primarily true in cases where the party leadership at the national level favors the greater participation of women in politics. Thus, centralized candidate selection may be more beneficial for women if gender equality is vital for the party elite (Murray 2010).

Moreover, the central party elite might indeed select more women candidates to compensate for the alleged democratic deficit produced by using a more centralized candidate selection procedure (Pruysers et al. 2017). Furthermore, in parties with centralized candidate selection, the party elite is interested in meeting the social expectation of the electorate and seeking a broad representation of candidates because they are easily held accountable for the (un)representativeness of the candidate pool (Pruysers et al. 2017). Evidence from Northern Ireland (Matthews 2014), the United Kingdom, Canada, and even some Scandinavian countries (Hazan and Rahat 2010) tend to support this view that higher levels of women's representation can be found in centralized candidate selection procedures. Based on this, I formulate the following hypothesis:

H1: Parties with a centralized selection procedure have a higher number of female candidates/get more women elected than parties with a decentralized candidate selection procedure.

The inclusiveness of the selection procedures – the size of the selectors who decide about the candidates – might also affect the candidates' representativeness. On the one hand, the argument is that more inclusive selectors comprising party members may produce unbalanced slates of electoral candidates, especially regarding gender composition (Pruysers et al. 2017). Examining candidate selection in Israel, Rahat, Hazan, and Katz (2008) find that parties with inclusive selectors (i.e., where party members can decide about the candidates) produced a candidate pool that was not representative in terms of gender. Therefore, they argue that these democratic values, such as inclusiveness and representativeness, might be unable to be simultaneously maximized within a single political party. Hazan and Rahat (2010) present cases from the Netherlands and Belgium where parties decided not to involve party members in the candidate selection procedure after the party members had drawn up a party candidate list that was not representative in many ways, including the representation of women. In Finland, first, party members select candidates. However, the party center can

then change a quarter of the candidates selected by party members to ensure that the selection procedure is representative (Hazan and Rahat 2010, 42). According to Narud and Valen (2008), Norwegian parties' candidates are representative in terms of gender because they use an exclusive candidate selection procedure.

On the other hand, some studies show that local activists who participate in the selection of candidates show little evidence of resistance to women politicians (Erickson 1993). Other studies argue that exclusive selectors might nominate more women, but for example, they are less likely to place women in a winnable position on the party list (Gauja and Cross 2015; Indriðason and Kristinsson 2015). However, it is a common perception that a narrower group may be better able to consider various aspects, address imbalances and ensure that women are represented in the candidate pool if this is an essential objective for the party center. A similar compromise to the centralized selection of candidates may be seen here. Since party members do not participate in the candidate selection procedure, exclusive selectors might at least try to ensure representativeness among the candidates (Pruysers and Cross 2016). At the same time, if the party wants to introduce newcomers, often women, it means that former candidates need to be removed, and such decisions are likely to be sensitive. Complex decisions are often easier to be made in small groups (Bjarnegård 2013). Based on the above, I hypothesize that

H2: Parties with exclusive candidate selection have a higher number of female candidates/get more women elected than parties with an inclusive selection procedure.

Beyond these dimensions, institutionalization (sometimes also mentioned as formalization or bureaucratization) of the candidate selection procedure is important for women's candidacy (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2016, 2017; Zetterberg 2009). In this chapter, I prefer to use the term institutionalized because the variable I use is slightly different from the one used by Bjarnegård and Zetterberg (2016). According to the neo-institutionalist framework, a candidate selection procedure is institutionalized when it is regulated formally in written party documents (Freidenberg and Levitsky 2006). According to Bjarnegård and Zetterberg (2016), a selection procedure is bureaucratized when a strong regulatory framework guides the selection, the procedure is described in party documents, and what is written in party regulations is also implemented in practice. Using unique data on almost 100 Latin American parties, Bjarnegård and Zetterberg (2016) show that parties with the bureaucratized selection procedure and gender quotas put more women on their candidate

lists than other parties with informal candidate selection and gender quotas. They argue that this may be because parties with bureaucratized candidate selection can better comply with formal rules such as quota laws. An additional reason for this could be that those parties or countries have more formalized party rules that are more law-bound, modern, and meritocratic.

Furthermore, a highly institutionalized nomination procedure can benefit women because of the transparency and predictability and because it makes it easier to know what specific steps aspirants should expect. Thus, female candidates know what they must do to be nominated. Previous literature suggests that informal networks and practices might trump formal rules, and the existing informal practices of political recruitment may shape and constrain who can be a candidate or who is the "ideal" candidate (Bjarnegård 2013; Bjarnegård and Kenny 2015, 2016; Cheng and Tavits 2011; Franceschet and Piscopo 2014; Montgomery and Ilonszki 2003; Murray 2010). In the case of non-institutionalized selection, there is more room for informal practices such as clientelism and patronage systems that are more likely to favor men than female candidates. Bjarnegård and Kenny (2016) suggest that informal networks and practices disadvantaged women from being a candidate in the case of Thailand and Scotland because selectors view women and men in diverse ways. They argue that male selectors prefer men for several reasons, but most importantly because male candidates are part of the "insider" group who are typically men. In contrast, women are considered outsiders to the party. The "outsiders" are seen as less trustable people with fewer networks (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2017). Thus, it may well be expected that an informal candidate selection procedure allows party gatekeepers more room for maneuver, which can disadvantage women's representation. On this basis, I hypothesize that

H3: Parties with institutionalized candidate selection have more female candidates/get more women elected than parties with non-institutionalized candidate selection.

In addition to the various aspects of candidate selection, party rules regarding gender for candidate selection may also impact the representation of women. Gender quotas are one such regulation that their requirements must be considered by the selectors when deciding on the candidates. Quotas can take the form of targets and recommendations (soft quotas), or they may be binding requirements with sanctions for non-compliance (hard quotas) (Krook 2014). According to Childs (2013), the use of quotas often leads to intra-party conflict because many objects to them, claiming that it interferes with democratic procedures.

Usually, either the state imposes a quota by law (legislated quota), or sometimes parties voluntarily impose a quota on themselves (party or voluntary quota). The significance of this for the analysis is that the legislated quota operates at the system level, while the party quota operates at the party level. However, previous literature suggests that both the legislated and the party quotas may be expected to result in higher numbers of women candidates and representatives (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; Davidson-Schmich 2006; Krook 2010b). Therefore, I expect that

H4: Parties with voluntary gender quotas will have a higher number of female candidates/get more women elected than parties without voluntary gender quotas.

H5: Parties with legislated gender quotas will have a higher number of female candidates/get more women elected than parties without legislative gender quotas.

3.2 Data and Variables

The analysis is significantly based on cross-sectional data from the Political Party Database Project (PPDB) on party organizational structures and practices. This project focuses on the official story, which means that their data collection relies on the analysis of party documents and internal regulations (Poguntke et al. 2016). The PPDB Project includes 140 parties from 25 countries: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom. Thus, the unit of analysis is a single political party in one of the 25 countries. This cross-country and cross-party database allows me to test the hypotheses in older and newer democracies, in more developed and less developed countries, in countries with and without legislated gender quotas, and to examine differences across a variety of party families and electoral systems. The primary purpose of this analysis is to demonstrate how distinct aspects of the candidate selection procedure affect women's chances of first becoming a candidate and then a representative. Fortunately, the database offers an excellent opportunity to explore this question with a remarkably diverse set of parties.

Dependent variables

Most previous studies focus on the number of female representatives elected to legislatures because of a lack of data on candidates and aspirants (Caul 1999; Paxton 1997; Stockemer 2018). It has been challenging to obtain comparative data at the candidate level for a long time. However, ideally, an analysis of the gendered consequences of political parties' selection

should be on candidates instead of representatives. The reason for this is that already in the candidate selection procedure, it is often pre-decided which candidates will become MPs. Because parties nominate candidates they want to see in parliament, on party lists, or in single-member districts where they have a chance of winning, thus, it is the parties who decide the pool of candidates from which the voters can choose. It is therefore worth examining the different stages: who the candidates are, which candidates became MPs and why specific candidates do not become MPs.

Since the PPDB dataset allows me to include data not only on MPs but also on candidates, in this analysis, I examine the impact of different candidate selection procedures on the proportion of female candidates and female MPs. Moreover, the database contains data not only on all female candidates but they have separate data on the female list candidates. Thus, this allows examining the differences between list candidates and the total number of candidates, if any. I test the hypotheses using separate models, each with a different specification of the dependent variable. While in the first two models, the dependent variable of the analysis is the proportion of women among all candidates, in the second two models, the dependent variable is the proportion of women among the list candidates. Finally, in the last two models, the dependent variable is the women's share of party legislators in the selected parties.

Independent variables

The main independent variables refer to the various aspects of candidate selection: whether the candidate selection happens at the national or local level (*centralization-decentralization*), who are the selectors or the size of the selectors (*exclusive-inclusive*), or whether the party has written and specified rules governing the candidate selection procedure (*bureaucratization*). These dimensions show how the party's organizational structure may influence women's descriptive representation. Considering the level of centralization, I differentiated between parties where the central party (at the national or regional level) has the authority over the candidate selection procedure and where the authority to select candidates is given to the local party body. Thus, it is a dichotomous variable in which 'zero' means decentralized parties, and 'one' means centralized parties. I categorized similarly the size of the selectors, namely the exclusiveness vs. inclusiveness variable. I consider a candidate selection inclusive when party members have the most prominent role in selecting candidates. Therefore, the

inclusiveness of the candidate selection procedure is coded as 'zero' when party members are also the selectors and 'one' when party members are not involved.

In their study, Bjarnegård and Zetterberg (2016) used Norris' oft-cited definition of bureaucratization, which suggests that bureaucratized selection procedure is carried out according to written rules that "are detailed, explicit, standardized, implemented by party officials, and authorized in party documents" (Norris 1996b, 202). Because the PPDB database does not provide any information on the implementation, it is not possible to know if the selectors implement the written rules or not. However, the database provides information on formalization, e.g., whether there are written rules regarding candidate selection or not. I will therefore use a slightly modified version of Norris's definition and prefer to use the term institutionalized for this variable. I coded this variable 'zero' when there are no rules regarding candidate selection and 'one' when there are rules regarding candidate selection. Drawing on Bjarnegård and Zetterberg's study (2016), I constructed two variables to explore whether a candidate selection procedure is specified, meaning that the written rules are detailed, explicit, and standardized. Specification 1 assesses whether the written rules include information on where the candidates are selected or not (national or subnational level), and Specification 2 assesses whether party statutes establish who selects the candidates (ranging from individuals' composition to open primaries). To construct a variable measuring the level of institutionalization, parties needed to have written party documents that 1) authorize formal procedures for candidate selection and 2) specify either who is responsible for the selection of candidates or where the candidate selection is taking place.

To consider other theoretically relevant variables, I use a set of control variables at the party and national (system) levels. These control variables are associated with a party's propensity to adopt formal rules into its regulations and potentially with women's descriptive representation. At the party level, I first control for whether the party has any gender rules regarding their candidate selection, for example, whether they adopted *voluntary party quotas* in their regulations or not. I also control for *party ideology* since there is a strong view in the literature that party ideology affects women's political representation. It is argued that higher female representation is more likely found in left-wing parties than in right-wing parties. One reason may be that left-wing parties are more committed to gender equality and women's representation. For example, previous research (e.g. Murray 2010; Zetterberg 2009) shows that leftist and green parties and parties with voluntary party quotas are more inclusive

of minorities and women. In addition, other studies also show that left-wing parties seem to comply with quota laws to a greater extent than other parties (Hinojosa 2012; Murray 2007).

At the system level, I first control for a politico-institutional variable, namely, the *electoral system*, which means I distinguish between majoritarian and proportional electoral systems. It is also well established in the literature that proportional electoral systems with closed lists tend to result in a higher representation of women. Furthermore, much research highlights the role of legislated gender quotas in increasing women's numerical representation worldwide (Caul 2001; Krook 2014). Thus, I consider whether a country has a *gender quota* law since it certainly affects the candidate procedure. I expect that parties with legislated gender quotas will have a higher number of female candidates/get more women elected than parties without legislative gender quotas. Finally, I consider a *country's level of socio-economic development* using a Human Development Index (HDI)[7] because a socio-economically developed country is associated with a broader distribution of educational and occupational resources. Greater access to educational and occupational resources will likely bring more women into the labor force and thus into public office (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2017). Bjarnegård and Zetterberg (2017) argue that a country's socio-economic development level may impact both political party organizations and women's propensity to run for political office.

3.3 Analysis and Findings

Before moving on to the analysis, I first present some descriptive data. Table 8 shows that just under half of the parties (46%) mention gender in their rules on nominating candidates, and just over half of the parties (54%) do not have any gender-related provisions in their nomination rules. These gender rules mainly refer to voluntary party quotas. Similarly, under half of the parties (49%) have a women's sub-organization. One-third of parties have a written requirement for both genders to be represented at party congresses, and 39 percent of the parties also require gender representation on the party executive. These provisions vary widely from party to party.

According to the party statute, in some parties, such as the Greens in Austria, every elected body should have at least 50 percent of female members. In some other cases, the president of the women's organization has a reserved seat on the board, as in the People's Party in Austria. Other parties do not have a specific requirement for female representation

[7]See more here: http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi

but require both sexes to be on the list. The party statute of the Portuguese Socialist Party states that the party bodies must ensure a representation of at least one-third of members of either sex. Similar provisions can be seen for gender representation at the party congress. Equal gender representation is often declared in the party statutes, as in the Party of the Democratic Revolution and National Action Party in Mexico or the Democratic Party in Italy. In other cases, the women's organizations can send delegates to the congress, as in the Liberal Party and Christian Democrats in Sweden and the Christian Democratic Appeal in the Netherlands. It is often only regulated that either sex is entitled to be represented in more than a particular proportion, e.g., in the Socialist Party in Spain, either sex is entitled to no less than 40% and no more than 60% of representation in all party organs.

Table 8 Percentage of parties with gender specific rules

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total number of parties
Gender mentioned in candidate selection rules	46	54	143
Women's sub-organization	49	51	170
Gender representation at party congress	32	68	169
Gender representation at party executive	39	61	169
Legislated gender quota affecting parties' candidate selection procedure	32	68	146

Source: own elaboration based on PPDB database.

Table 9 shows the proportions of the total number of female candidates, female list candidates nominated by parties, and female representatives elected in each party family. Party ideology is essential for women's political representation in terms of candidates and representatives. According to the table, the green parties have the highest proportion of female candidates and the highest number of elected women representatives. Interestingly, the greens are the only party family with a higher proportion of female representatives than candidates. In the other party families, there are more female candidates than female representatives. This suggests that the green parties are genuinely committed to women's higher representation and provide female candidates with good opportunities to become representatives. Furthermore, the descriptive data confirm previous findings in the literature

that left-wing parties have a higher proportion of female candidates and representatives than right-wing parties. Right-wing populist parties have the fewest female candidates and the fewest female MPs.

Table 9 Mean percentages of women candidates, women list candidates and women representatives by party family

Party family	Mean % of women total candidates	Mean % of women list candidates	Mean % of women representatives
Greens	44 (13)	48 (18)	50 (14)
Social Democrats	38 (22)	41 (12)	33 (23)
Liberals	37 (20)	37 (11)	30 (20)
Left Socialists	37 (9)	41 (8)	32 (10)
Far Right (extreme right)	32 (7)	28 (5)	26 (7)
Christian Democrats/Conservatives	31 (25)	33 (18)	24 (27)
Right-wing (populists)	26 (7)	24 (5)	13 (7)
Total	36 (103)	36 (66)	31 (108)

Source: own elaboration based on PPDB database. Note: the number of parties is in parentheses.

Table 10 shows how the proportion of women among candidates and MPs varies according to the different rules of the parties for nominating candidates. A higher proportion of women candidates and representatives can be seen when parties adopt gender rules in their candidate selection procedures. Unsurprisingly, the application of both the voluntary party gender quota and the legislated gender quota leads to the highest proportion of female candidates and representatives in political parties. It is also clear that the gender rules adopted by parties significantly impact candidates more than representatives. This may be because other factors may interfere with becoming a representative. At the same time, it makes a difference whether a party has a gender rule for nominating candidates. Parties with gender

requirements for nominating candidates have at least five percentage points higher proportions of female candidates than parties that do not.

Table 10 Mean percentages of women total candidates, women list candidates and women representatives by adoption of party rules

	Women total candidates		Women list candidates		Women Representatives	
	% when adopted	% when not adopted	% when adopted	% when not adopted	% when adopted	% when not adopted
Gender mentioned in candidate selection rules	38	31	38	32	34	27
Women's sub-organization	33	28	35	25	30	26
Gender representation at party congress	34	29	37	26	29	27
Gender representation at party executive	33	29	32	29	30	27
Legislated gender quota affecting parties' candidate selection procedures	44	30	44	31	32	29

Source: own elaboration based on PPDB database.

After introducing some descriptive data, I turn to the analysis (see Table 11). Models 1 and 2 test the hypotheses on women total candidates, while Models 3 and 4 test the hypotheses on women list candidates, and finally, Models 5 and 6 test the hypotheses on elected women representatives. In Models 1, 3, and 5, I include party-level variables such as rules regarding gender (voluntary party quotas), centralization, exclusiveness, institutionalization, and party ideology. In Models 2, 4, and 6, I keep the party-level variables and add the system-level control variables such as legislated gender quota, electoral system, and socio-economic development. In all models, I find several variables significantly related to the number of women nominated and elected.

Regarding my first hypothesis (H1), the centralization of the candidate selection procedure seems negatively associated with women's representation. Parties that give authority to local party branches to select the candidates tend to nominate and elect more women than parties that select their candidates at the national level. This suggests that party

selectors at the national level might still be biased against female candidates, whereas the local party branches show a more inclusive attitude towards female candidates.

Similarly, a negative relationship exists between exclusive candidate selection and the number of women selected and elected to the legislature (H2). However, exclusive candidate selection is significant only for female list candidates and representatives. In parties in which party members play a role in the selection of candidates, a significantly higher number of women are selected to the list and elected to the legislature even after system-level variables are added. Perhaps one reason for this is that it is much easier for party leaders to put themselves at the top of the party list in the case of exclusive candidate selection procedures. However, party leaders do not have unlimited influence over who stands for election in the majoritarian tier of the electoral systems, namely in constituencies.

Regarding hypothesis 3, there is a positive relationship between institutionalization and the number of female candidates and representatives. Parties that formalize their candidate selection procedure in written, specific and detailed rules tend to have a significantly higher proportion of women nominated and elected representatives. Thus, the analysis confirms the third hypothesis. However, the effect is no longer significant once the system-level variables are added.

Consistent with the literature, party ideology matters, and leftist parties, especially the green parties, have more female candidates and representatives than right-wing parties. The effect of the legislated gender quota is also significant, but only for candidates. In other words, parties with legislated gender quotas nominate more women but do not elect more women. This suggests that parties comply with the quota requirements and nominate a higher proportion of women. However, they do not put women in the electable slots and get women into office. This also leads to the conclusion that quotas should contain ranking order rules. Otherwise, they will not achieve their goal of a higher proportion of women in parliament. I also find evidence that suggests that a socio-economically developed country is more likely to bring more women into politics.

Table 11 OLS regression with percentage of women total candidates, women list candidates, and women representatives as the dependent variables

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	Women total candidates	Women total candidates (system)	Women list candidates	Women list candidates (system)	Women representatives	Women representatives (system)
Party selection rules: gender	-3.40	-2.22	-.66	.546	-3.48	-4.20
	(2.78)	(2.38)	(3.48)	(2.83)	(4.08)	(4.09)
Centralization	-3.74	-4.69 **	-5.06 *	-8.79 ***	-7.69 **	-6.53 *
	(2.43)	(2.14)	(3.02)	(2.76)	(3.60)	(3.72)
Exclusiveness	-.02	-.017	-.03 **	-.037 ***	-.03	-.039 *
	(.02)	(.01)	(.02)	(.01)	(.03)	(.02)
Institutionalization	6.03 **	4.03	9.22 **	2.969	7.69 *	4.008
	(2.83)	(2.56)	(4.38)	(3.88)	(4.34)	(4.55)
Social Democrats	6.88 *	7.47 **	9.26 *	12.33 ***	4.84	3.82
	(3.57)	(3.06)	(4.86)	(3.96)	(5.30)	(5.27)
Liberals	8.38 **	6.22 **	6.47	5.19	5.44	2.12
	(3.45)	(3.03)	(4.65)	(3.76)	(5.234)	(5.35)
Greens	14.79 ***	15.11 ***	19.02 ***	21.46 ***	23.41 ***	21.91 ***
	(3.98)	(3.41)	(5.47)	(4.44)	(5.89)	(5.88)
Left Socialists	8.75 *	6.99 *	10.12 *	8.51 **	7.18	4.72
	(4.71)	(4.09)	(5.27)	(4.25)	(6.81)	(6.84)
Right-wing (populists)	-3.45	-2.50	-8.32	-3.13	-13.98	-15.55 *
	(5.58)	(4.77)	(7.09)	(5.82)	(8.50)	(8.48)
Far right (extreme right)	7.40	6.79	3.52	6.17	7.07	5.51
	(5.36)	(4.58)	(6.65)	(5.36)	(8.18)	(8.13)
Legislated gender quota		15.44 ***		24.72 ***		6.51
		(2.91)		(24.72)		(4.91)
PR system		2.57		-.43		4.59
		(2.55)		(3.06)		(4.13)
Socio-economic development		51.96		171.698 ***		112.00 *
		(38.86)		(53.324)		(66.71)
Constant	32.02	-21.52	25.86	-132.59	29.13	-74.21
R^2 (N)	.22 (130)	.46 (130)	0.30 (87)	0.57 (87)	0.22 (136)	0.26 (136)

Note: Reference category for party family is 'Christian Democratic/Conservative'. Unstandardized OLS regression coefficients, robust standard error in parenthesis. Checked by VIF statistics to be free of multicollinearity problems.

*** = sign. at < 0.01; ** = sign. at < 0.05; * = sign. at < 0.10.

Figure 4 shows how the proportion of female candidates and representatives varies across parties with different candidate selection procedures. The share of women increases by five percentage points when the candidate selection procedure changes from centralized to decentralized and from exclusive to inclusive. The difference is even more significant for representatives, with the share of women increased by almost ten percentage points when the candidate selection changes from centralized to decentralized and from exclusive to inclusive. Significant changes can be seen by looking at the proportion of female candidates and representatives in parties with the informal and bureaucratic nomination procedure. Parties with institutionalized candidate selection procedures have a five to nine percentage points higher proportion of female candidates and representatives than parties with non-institutionalized candidate selection procedures.

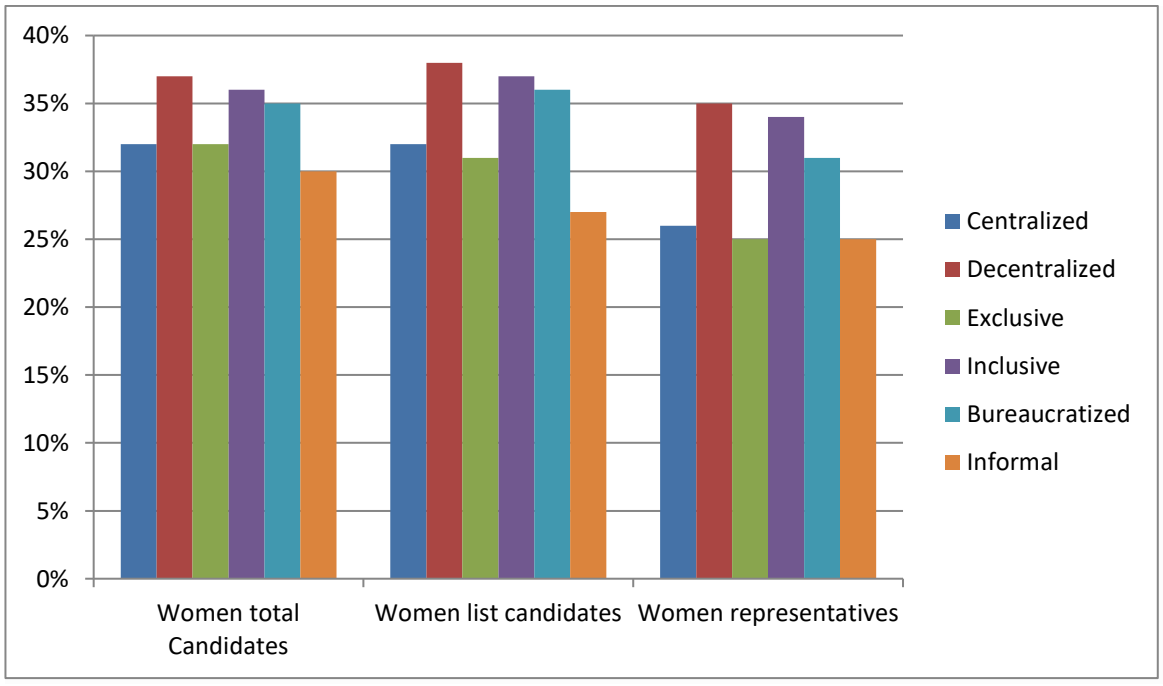

Figure 4 Mean percentages of women candidates and representatives with centralized/decentralized, exclusive/inclusive and bureaucratized/informal candidate selection procedures
Source: own elaboration based on PPDB database.

3.4 Discussion

This chapter has analyzed the relationship between political parties and women's representation. More specifically, I have tested hypotheses regarding the candidate selection procedures of political parties and how they affect the number of female candidates and representatives. Research on candidates is still rare because obtaining data at the candidate

level is difficult. Unlike most previous studies, in this chapter, I investigated the impact of the candidate selection procedure on female candidates and representatives. I expected that parties with a centralized, exclusive, and formal/institutionalized candidate selection procedure would have more female candidates and representatives than parties with decentralized, inclusive, and informal candidate selection. The multivariate analysis provides only partial support to the hypotheses.

First, my main argument was that exclusive and centralized selectors would result in a more significant number of women candidates and representatives. However, contrary to my hypotheses, the number of women candidates and women representatives is higher in parties in which members participate directly in the candidate selection procedures, and the selection happens at the local level. One reason for this could be that parties that allow members at the local level to participate in the selection of candidates may be more inclusive and have positive attitudes toward women's representation and therefore select more women as candidates. Indriðason and Kristinsson (2015, 570) also suggest that including party members in the recruitment decision might mobilize women and potentially break former barriers to women's representation. In contrast, a candidate selection procedure, which is not open to party members and party lists that are decided by a small network of party insiders – historically and predominantly men – is more likely to favor men. In other words, including party members in the selection of candidates can reduce the 'outgroup bias' that the party elite may have against women. This is in line with previous studies showing that selectors view women and men differently. Male selectors prefer men for several reasons, but most importantly, because male candidates are part of the "insider" group who are typically men. In contrast, women are considered outsiders to the party (Bjarnegård and Kenny 2016).

Second, in contrast to what Bjarnegård and Zetterberg (2016) claimed that institutionalization is only beneficial for women in candidate recruitment procedures when it is implemented with gender quotas. However, my findings suggest that institutionalized candidate selection itself may result in a higher number of female candidates and representatives. This suggests that parties must write transparent, detailed, and specific rules for the candidate nomination procedure if they are committed to increasing women's representation in politics. Suppose parties use and implement the written rules guiding their election candidate selection procedure. In that case, this leaves little room for informality and backroom deals, in which women politicians are less able to prevail.

Overall, the findings show that parties with inclusive, decentralized, and institutionalized candidate selection procedures have more female candidates and representatives than parties with exclusive, centralized, and less institutionalized selection procedures. However, the different candidate selection methods have a more significant impact on the female list candidates rather than on the total number of female candidates (which also include candidates running in districts) or female representatives. This may be because it is easier for the selectors to influence the list's composition. After all, it is a more centralized procedure, whereas, in single-member constituencies, multiple aspects must be considered. This also suggests that inclusive, decentralized, and institutionalized candidate selection procedures help to select more women candidates, but it does not necessarily increase the number of women representatives. Moreover, if system-level variables are considered, only the centralization and exclusiveness of candidate selection procedures seem to matter in the case of list candidates. Thus, I found only partial support for the hypotheses.

It can be concluded that the parties' nomination procedures produce different results regarding women's political representation. Therefore, it matters which types of candidate selection procedures are used. As Rahat, Hazan, and Katz (2008) suggest, an investigation of gender serves as a good proxy for representation in a general sense because it is a feature of political representation relevant to most political parties. Therefore, the findings of this chapter are likely to have implications for descriptive representation more broadly, e.g., for ethnic minorities. Thus, selectors and policymakers should pay special attention to the parties and their candidate selection procedures if women's and other minorities' stronger political representation is a fundamental goal.

4 Chapter: Candidate Selection Procedures in Hungary

The previous chapter has shown which aspects of the candidate selection procedure are particularly relevant for women's political representation. These aspects included *decentralization, inclusiveness,* and *institutionalization* of the candidate selection procedure. In this chapter, therefore, I investigate these three aspects in more depth in Hungary by analyzing the party statutes of political parties on the one hand and the results of interviews as aspirants, candidates, MPs, and selectors on the other hand. I study the previously established factors in Hungary because Hungary still has the lowest percentage of women in parliament, and I try to establish why this is the case. Furthermore, this chapter examines the candidate selection procedures of the leading Hungarian political parties with the aim of better understanding the impact of the formal and informal rules governing the parties' candidate selection procedure on women's representation in the legislature. This case study chapter is necessary to study further the formal rules of the parties' candidate selection procedure introduced in the previous chapter and to understand how parties within a country are similar or different in this respect.

First, by analyzing party rules, I show how candidates should be selected according to formal rules. Second, interviews with actors involved in the candidate selection procedure may confirm whether the selection of candidates is carried out as described in the parties' written rules or, if not, how formal and informal candidate selection may differ and interact within and between parties. According to Freidenberg and Levitsky (2006), the literature on political parties pays little attention to informal organization, as the literature relies heavily on Western European countries, many of which are highly institutionalized, often assuming a relatively close fit between formal structure and actual organization. However, the example of Latin American parties suggests that there can be a massive gap between how formally well-structured parties operate on paper and in practice (Freidenberg and Levitsky 2006).

Previous research shows that the formal and informal rules for selecting and nominating candidates offer different opportunities for female candidates to become representatives (Bjarnegård 2013; Bjarnegård and Kenny 2015, 2016; Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2011; Cheng and Tavits 2011; Piscopo 2016). Parties' formal internal procedures for selecting their candidates reveal how transparent, democratic, and inclusive they are within the party (Hazan and Rahat 2010; Rahat, Hazan, and Katz 2008). However, the findings on the impact of the informal candidate selection procedure on women's political representation are yet inconclusive (Bjarnegård 2013; Cheng and Tavits 2011; Piscopo 2016). On the one

hand, the informal aspect of the candidate selection procedure seems to be disadvantageous for women, as men tend to dominate the informal spheres and relationships. On the other hand, Piscopo (2016) suggested that women's ability to create and establish informal networks and relationships could help them to become candidates. In other words, the informal candidate selection procedure might favor female candidates. I, therefore, hope that the Hungarian case may well help to clarify this issue.

The political parties in Hungary all have official rules written in the party statutes, which to a certain extent, formally regulate their candidate selection procedure. By examining the party statutes, it can be seen whether parties' formal selection rules are heterogeneous or homogenous regarding the opportunities they offer for female aspirants to become candidates and elected representatives. On the other hand, the interviews conducted with aspirants, candidates, and selectors show how informal and formal rules interact in the candidate selection procedure. As the previous chapter showed, there are differences between parties' candidate selection procedures according to their formal rules. Thus, I first analyze the formal rules of the major Hungarian parties: Párbeszéd, DK, Fidesz, Jobbik, Momentum, MSZP, and LMP, according to where the candidate selection procedure takes place (decentralized vs. centralized), who is involved (exclusive vs. inclusive), and how institutionalized or less institutionalized the candidate selection rules are.

To the best of my knowledge, only Marjai (2012) has so far examined the party statutes of the Hungarian parties using qualitative tools. However, Marjai's study focused on why a specific selection method was chosen in a respective party organization and what determines their procedure choice. This dissertation is, therefore, the first qualitative study that examines the relationship between the formal and informal rules of the candidate selection procedures and women's political representation in Hungary.

In the first part of this chapter, I examine the formal rules that direct the candidate selection and nomination by analyzing party statutes. Here, I describe how candidate selection is theoretically carried out according to formal rules and examine each party according to the three aspects of the candidate selection procedure described in the previous chapter. In the second part, I examine how formal rules are affected by informal norms in the candidate selection procedure by analyzing data from interviews with party selectors, aspirants, candidates, and representatives. Finally, in the discussion section, I explain how the

formal and informal rules of parties' candidate selection procedure relate to each other and what effect these two might have on women's representation in politics.

4.1 Formal Rules that Direct the Candidate Selection Procedures

Most parties describe the procedure of nominating and selecting candidates for parliamentary elections in their party statutes. In this section, I examine the parties' statutes regarding what they contain about the candidate selection procedure and compare them with each other.

As described in the previous chapter, I analyze three aspects of parties' candidate selection procedure: 1) whether the candidate selection happens at the national or local level (*centralization vs. decentralization*), 2) who are the selectors (*inclusiveness vs. exclusiveness*), or 3) if the party has formalized or informal rules the candidate selection procedure (*institutionalization vs. non-institutionalization*). Regarding the level of centralization, parties' candidate selection procedures are considered centralized if the central party, either at the national or regional level, has the authority over the candidate selection procedure. In contrast, decentralized selection means that the local party body has the authority to select candidates. Regarding inclusiveness, I consider a party's candidate selection procedure inclusive when party members or the congress have the most prominent role in selecting candidates. On the other hand, a candidate selection is exclusive when the party leader or a small group of party leaders decide on the candidates. Lastly, the parties' candidate selection procedure is institutionalized if there are written rules that guide the candidate selection procedure. In contrast, it is non-institutionalized if there are no such rules, and it is not easy to get a grip on who nominates the candidates and at what level.

4.1.1 Párbeszéd

According to the party's statute, in Párbeszéd, the *National Presidium* (Országos Elnökség) is involved in selecting candidates. The *Regional Assembly* (Területi Taggyűlés) may nominate and veto candidates for parliamentary elections. The *National Presidium* must nominate a new candidate if a veto is issued. Figure 5 shows how the party selects its candidates for the general parliamentary elections.

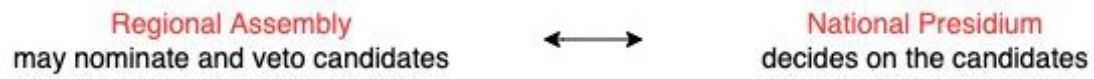

Figure 5 The candidate selection procedure of Párbeszéd
Source: Own elaboration based on the Párbeszéd's party statute

The National Presidium is the party's administrative organ, exercising the rights of the Congress between two congresses, which do not fall within the exclusive functions and powers of the Congress. The party statute states that the party's national officers are the party's National Presidium members. The territorial organizations of the party are the county local organizations. The decision-making body of the local organization is the Regional Assembly.

Párbeszéd's statute is not very explicit. For example, it does not mention the list and single-member district candidates separately. The candidate selection procedure does not appear to be particularly institutionalized as it is unclear 1) what criteria are used to select candidates, 2) who nominates the candidates in what order or 3) how many vetoes can be issued, and on what basis exactly can veto be issued. In terms of centralization and exclusiveness, it appears that although the Regional Assembly can nominate candidates and have veto power, the selection of candidates can be considered centralized and exclusive because the National Presidium consists of a few national leaders level decides on the selection of candidates. Moreover, other sources indicate that the party has a gender quota, but there is no mention of this in the party constitution.

4.1.2 DK

According to DK's party statute, the *Constituency Assembly* (Választókerületi Taggyűlés) proposes the party's single-member district candidate for the parliamentary elections in the given single-member district. Based on the opinion of the *Constituency Assembly*, the *National Presidium* (Elnökség) decides on the party's single-member district candidates in the individual constituencies. Thus, the nomination of single-member district candidates is institutionalized in the party. However, regarding the composition of the national party list, nothing is written in the party statute, so it is unclear how the candidates on the party list are selected. In other words, the compilation of the party list is not formally regulated in DK at all. Figure 6 shows how DK selects its SMD candidates according to the formal rules.

Figure 6 The candidate selection procedure of DK
Source: Own elaboration based on the DK's party statute

According to the statute, the National Presidium is responsible for the party's management. The National Presidium comprises the President, the Honorary President, up to five Vice-Presidents, and up to ten other members. The Constituency Organizations

(Választókerületi szervezet) operate in the single-member districts established for the general parliamentary elections. The supreme body of the Constituency Organizations is the Constituency Assembly, which includes all party members and registered supporters in the given constituency. The President and the board of the Constituency Organizations are directly elected by the Constituency Organization's general assembly for a two-year term. However, the National Presidium proposes the President of the Constituency Organization to the Constituency Assembly. The elected President of the Constituency Organization may propose to the Constituency Assembly, the other members of the Constituency Organization's leadership.

The party statute establishes that a gender quota is applied in selecting the party's leading officers. However, it is not entirely clear what the exact quota number is. According to the statute, the National Presidium and the leadership of the Constituency Organization must be elected, with at least one-fifth of the members being women. It is a bit confusing because elsewhere in the statute, it is stated that this proportion is one-third instead of one-fifth. If the number of female candidates does not allow this, or if less than the required proportion of women obtain a majority, the vacancies should not be filled. The National Presidium appoints the members of the National Council (Politikai Tanács) in the same proportions. The National Council is an advisory and consultative body alongside the National Presidium.

Overall, DK's nomination of candidates is formalized regarding single-member district candidates but not formalized regarding the list candidates. In terms of where the nomination takes place, the nomination is decentralized, as the local organization's general assembly can propose a candidate. However, the final decision is made at the national level. As more than a few individuals decide on candidates, the nomination procedure can be seen as inclusive rather than exclusive.

4.1.3 Fidesz

From the Fidesz statute (Fidesz - Magyar Polgári Szövetség 2019), it is clear which party unit is responsible for which step of the candidate selection procedure and who makes the final decision on the candidates. Figure 7 shows how the nomination of candidates is carried out in the party according to the formal rules.

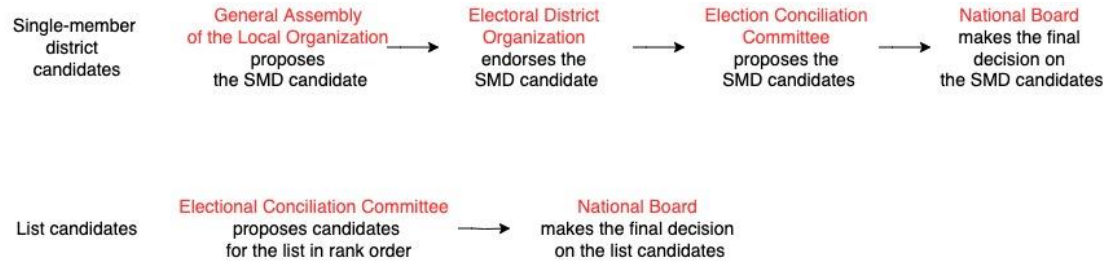

Figure 7 The candidate selection of Fidesz
Source: Own elaboration based on the Fidesz' party statute

First, the General Assembly of the *Local Organization* (Helyi szervezet) proposes a candidate to be nominated in the single-member district where the local organization is based. Second, the *Electoral District Organization* (Választókerületi szervezet) decides whether they will endorse the candidate suggested by the local organizations or not. Third, an *Election Conciliation Committee* (Választási Egyeztető Bizottság) is set up on the initiative of the President of the party. The members of the Election Conciliation Committee are the President of the party, the Head of the National Parliamentary Group of the party, the President of the National Board, the National Campaign Manager, and one person delegated by the National Presidium, two persons delegated by the National Board. Fourth, based on the proposals of the Local and the Electoral District Organizations, the Election Conciliation Committee makes a proposal to the National Board for the candidates running in the single-member districts. The Electoral Conciliation Committee also suggests names and the order of the candidates on the national list to the National Board. Fifth, the National Board decides which candidates are nominated in the single-member districts and on the party lists of candidates for the parliamentary elections.

Based on the statute, one would argue that Fidesz has a formalized candidate selection procedure. For example, based on the proposal of the Election Conciliation Committee, the National Board also sets up criteria for selecting candidates and how someone can become a candidate. As for the list candidates, the national party leadership oversees deciding who will be nominated and in which position on the list. Thus, the selection of the list candidates is very centralized. Although the rules allow local organizations to have a say in selecting single-member district (SMD) candidates, the national party leadership also has the last say in deciding about the SMD candidates. In Fidesz, previous studies show that the party's national leadership has the primary decision-making role regarding the formal rules (Balázs and Hajdú 2017; Kovarek and Soós 2016). Thus, the power is located at the party center. Metz and Várnagy (2021) suggest that the party leadership dominates the relationship between national and local bodies by appointing electoral district presidents who are usually very loyal party

members. They argue that this centralization helps to bypass local and middle-level leaders and prevent the emergence of independent power centers (Metz and Várnagy 2021).

From the point of view of candidate selection, it is exciting that the national party leadership decides who should be the leader of the electoral district organization. On the one hand, the Electoral District Organization endorses the SMD candidate suggested by the Local Organization's General Assembly. On the other hand, the President of the Electoral District Organization is often the candidate running for the respective single-member district at the national election (Metz and Várnagy 2021). This suggests that there is little room for other candidates to stand in single-member districts. Thus, it can be seen how centralized the selection of candidates is, not only in the case of the party list but also in the case of single-member district candidates. Some argue that Fidesz's nomination procedure is exclusive and that the power to decide on candidates rests solely in the hands of the party leader, Viktor Orbán (HVG 2022).

4.1.4 Jobbik

According to the Statute of Jobbik (Jobbik 2009), the *Local organization* (Alapszervezet/Helyi szervezet) proposes the candidates for the parliamentary election (see Figure 8). The Statute also mentions that in addition, three organizational units: the *National Election Committee* (Országos Választmány), the *Regional Election Committee* (Területi Választmány), and the *National Presidium* (Országos Elnökség) participate in the selection of the candidates to be nominated by Jobbik for the parliamentary elections.

Figure 8 The candidate selection of Jobbik
Source: Own elaboration based on the Jobbik's party statute

The *National Election Committee* is Jobbik's political, conciliatory, and decision-making forum, entitled to decide and take a position on all matters that do not fall within the competence of other party organizations between two Congresses. The National Election Committee members are the *National Presidium,* the Presidents of the *Regional Election*

Committees, one delegate elected by the *County Election Committees*, and six delegates elected by the *Budapest Election Committee*. The *Regional Election Committee* is the coordinating and decision-making forum of local organizations operating in a county or Budapest. Its membership can range from a few to more than fifty members. The *National Presidium* is the executive, administrative, representative, and decision-making body of Jobbik elected by *Congress*. The voting members of the *National Presidium* are the President of Jobbik, six Presidium members, and the President of the *National Election Committee*. The Party Director and the Economic Director are also invited to attend the meetings of the National Presidium, but without voting right.

Jobbik's statutes show that their candidate selection procedure is decentralized, with local organizations playing a pivotal role in the candidate selection. However, it is unclear what role the other three organizational units, such as the *Regional Election Committee*, the *National Presidium,* and the *National Election Committee*, exactly plan in the candidate selection procedure. In terms of the size of the selectors, candidate selection in Jobbik seems closer to the inclusive end, but it is challenging to say precisely. The candidate selection can be considered formalized because it carefully defines who the party's parliamentary candidates can be. However, it is not entirely formalized because the role of the different units in the selection of candidates is unclear, and there is no mention of how the party list is compiled. Thus, for example, the party list compilation seems non-institutionalized, giving much room for informality during the candidate selection procedure.

4.1.5 Momentum

The Momentum's party statute (Momentum Mozgalom 2019) is formalized in that they describe in detail how the various organizational units of the party are selected, who they are, and for how long their mandate lasts. However, there are few details on the nomination of candidates. According to Momentum's party statute, the rules for nominating candidates are proposed by the *National Presidium* (Országos Elnökség) and adopted by the *Delegates' Assembly* (Küldöttgyűlés). Similarly, the *National Presidium* proposes the candidates for the general elections, and the *Delegates' Assembly* accepts or rejects the proposal. Figure 9 describes the candidate selection procedure of Momentum.

Figure 9 The candidate selection of Momentum
Source: Own elaboration based on the Momentum's party statute

The party's executive body is the *National Presidium*, which is made up of the President and four other members. The *Delegates' Assembly* is the supreme decision-making body of Momentum. It consists of 84 delegates, who are elected on regional lists based on Hungary's NUTS2 regions (territories).

According to the party's statute, the candidate selection procedure seems quite simple in Momentum compared to some other parties. As far as centralization is concerned, it can be said that the nomination of candidates is centralized since it is the *National Presidium* that first proposes the candidates and, also at the national level, the *Delegates' Assembly* can decide whether to accept or reject the *Presidium's* proposal. However, regarding inclusivity, it seems that the nomination procedure is not exclusive, as 84 members may decide on the candidates. Nevertheless, the party statute does not say what voting mechanisms are used to decide on the Presidium's proposal or what happens if the Delegates' Assembly rejects the proposal. Thus, the nomination of candidates is not fully institutionalized in Momentum.

4.1.6 MSZP

The statute of the MSZP (Magyar Szocialista Párt 2020) describes in detail how the candidate selection procedure is carried out in the party according to the formal rules. Moreover, it specifies who is responsible for the various stages of the procedure in 'ordinary' circumstances and when the party decides to run together with other parties. It also regulates that the decision-makers can only take a position on the nomination of candidates based on a pre-defined set of criteria and when the decision-making bodies are quorate. The party also regulates what the aspirants themselves must do to become candidates. For example, a candidate who would like to run for an SMD seat is required to present their political program to the *Electoral District or* the *Local Party Forum* (Választókerületi vagy Helyi Pártfórum). The statute establishes that at least one-fifth of the members of elected governing bodies – at local, regional, and national levels – and of the candidates on party lists for parliamentary seats must be under 35 years of age, and at least one-fifth must be women. Thus, there is a 20 percent gender quota for nominating candidates. However, there is no ranking or sanctions for what happens if the party does not meet this quota requirement.

The selection procedure of the single-member district and the list candidates is as follows (see Figure 10). The governing body of the *Electoral District Association* (Választókerületi társulás) is the *Committee of the Electoral District Association* which prepares the nomination, obtains information on the preferences of the

party members, determines whether the SMD candidate fulfills the conditions laid down in the statute. Moreover, it consults with the *Regional Association* (Területi szövetség) and the *National Presidency* (Országos elnökség) or the *National Election Committee* (Országos Választási Bizottság) on the candidate; and finally decides whom to recommend as an SMD candidate to the *General Assembly* (Taggyűlés). The General Assembly is the decision-making body of the Electoral District Association. The National Presidency can refuse to give its necessary consent prior to the nomination of candidates if they find that the person recommended as a candidate does not fulfill the conditions laid down in the statute. Alternatively, if an event has occurred which would cause apparent damage to the electoral interests of the party or jeopardies the realization of the party's electoral interests. In the case of a decision on the SMD candidate, the nominating forum is quorate if more than half of those entitled to vote are present. If the accepted candidate does not receive the support of at least one-third of those entitled to vote, the National Election Committee may initiate a repeated nomination. The members of the National Election Committee are the party co-chairs, the party's candidate for prime minister, the party's deputy chairperson(s), vice-chairpersons, the chairperson of the National Board, the leader of the parliamentary group, the party director, and the campaign manager.

Regarding the list candidates, the *National Board* (Országos Választmány), based on a proposal from the National Presidency, defines the principles for selecting candidates for the parliamentary election and submits a proposal to Congress about the party's national party list for the parliamentary election. The National Board is the party's strategic and policy-making body, with more than 100 members delegated by the different party units. After receiving the joint proposal from the party's National Board and National Presidency, Congress decides on the national list for the parliamentary elections.

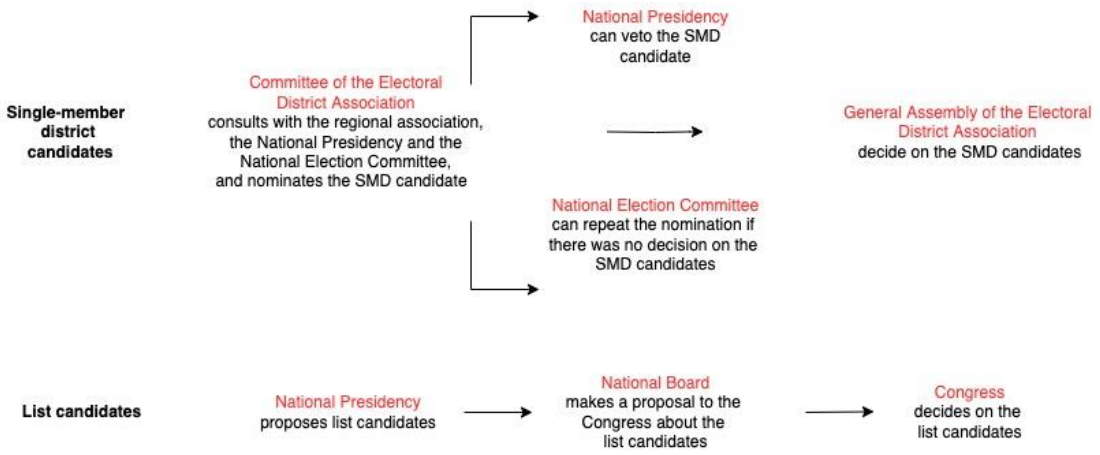

Figure 10 The candidate selection procedure of MSZP
Source: Own elaboration based on the MSZP' party statute

Suppose the party runs together with other organizations for the general elections. In that case, MSZP's National Board determines the principles for establishing and operating the electoral cooperation agreement. It authorizes the National Presidency to conduct concluding negotiations to establish an electoral cooperation agreement. MSZP's Electoral Board may decide about the parties invited to cooperate, the possible legal form of cooperation (including the establishment of joint candidates and joint lists), the authorization to prepare and participate in primaries for the selection of joint candidates, the minimum requirements for the primaries, the principles of establishing a joint list, the conditions for securing a place on the party's national list, and the possible cases of withdrawal of the party's candidates.

In the national election, the National Presidency may undertake to support a common candidate, an independent candidate, or a candidate of another party in a single-member district, to participate in the primaries, to adopt the rules for the primaries, to support the candidate selected in the duly conducted primaries. Prior to the negotiations concerning the SMD candidates, the National Presidency should ask the opinion of the Committee of the Electoral District Association on the possible suitable candidates for joint support by the parties concerned. The National Presidency should keep the Committee of the Electoral District Association informed of the progress of the negotiations concerning the SMD candidate and the personal proposals of cooperation partners. It should seek its opinion before formulating its negotiating position. The Committee of the Electoral District Association elects the SMD candidate according to the general rules if the MSZP nominates a candidate in the single-member district based on the electoral cooperation agreement.

The formal rule of the MSZP shows that the party's nomination procedure is highly institutionalized. The party's formal rules are detailed regarding the candidate selection procedure. Furthermore, the selection of SMD candidates is decentralized, while the selection of list candidates is more centralized. In both cases, the nomination of candidates seems to be inclusive because, in the end, both SMD and list candidates are selected by the general assembly.

4.1.7 LMP

According to the LMP's party statute (LMP 2018), the *Congress* (Kongresszus) is the main decision-making body of the party and decides on the rules for the selection of candidates for the parliamentary elections (see Figure 11). Congress approves the candidates to be nominated or supported by the party in the general election. The *National Presidium* (Országos Elnökség) and the *National Political Council* (Országos Politikai Tanács) are also involved in the selection of candidates to be nominated by the party in the parliamentary elections.

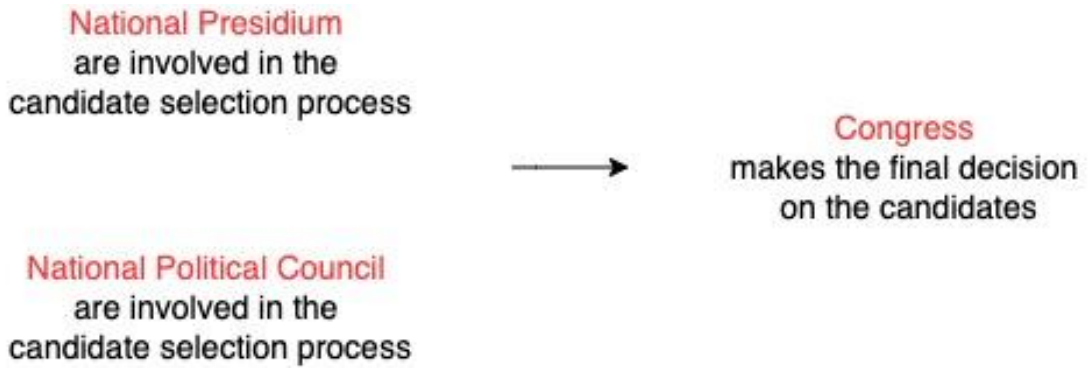

Figure 11 The candidate selection procedure of LMP
Source: Own elaboration based on the LMP' party statute

The Congress comprises elected delegates nominated by the regional organizations (Területi Szervezetek). In addition, the *National Presidium* comprises two co-chairs, one male and one female, the Secretary, and four other general members. The *National Political Council* assists and monitors party policy implementation and the party's functioning between two congresses. The *National Political Council* is composed of delegates elected by the *Congress*, equal to the total number of members of the *National Presidium* and one member delegated by each regional organization.

The party statute stipulates that, based on the principle of democratic participation, the party aims to reflect the diversity and gender equality in its decision-making. It is therefore

committed to the participation of women and men in the party's governing bodies and national candidate lists. To this end, it applies a gender quota, which sets a minimum or relative participation rate for each gender, and a women's quota, which sets a minimum participation rate for women without maximizing it. This means that a gender quota is applied in selecting members of all the various party units (National Presidium, regional organizations, local group leadership, committees, and working groups). It is also stipulated that, for example, the proportion of each gender in the membership of the *National Presidium* should not be less than the proportion of the minority gender in the party membership. In addition, the party applies a gender quota in its parliamentary lists, whereby no more than two candidates of the same sex may be elected consecutively from the second place. Two candidates of the opposite gender may occupy the first and second places.

Overall, the formal rules of LMP do not clarify what role the different party units play in the candidate selection procedure. Therefore, the nomination procedure is not very institutionalized. Regarding centralization and inclusiveness, it seems as if the candidate selection procedure of LMP is centralized but, at the same time, inclusive because the Congress at the national level decides on the candidates.

4.1.8 Comparing the Parties' Candidate Selection Procedures

The analyses of the parties' statutes show significant differences in how they regulate the candidate selection procedures in party documents. In this section, I compared the parties' candidate selection procedures based on the criteria established in the previous chapter. In other words, this section examined the extent to which a party's candidate selection procedure is centralized vs. decentralized, exclusive vs. inclusive, and institutionalized vs. non-institutionalized according to the party statutes. Table 12 shows how parties are classified according to the three dimensions. Interestingly, only in the case of Fidesz and MSZP was the selection of candidates for single-member districts (SMD) and list candidates regulated separately in the party statutes.

For this reason, they can be considered the most institutionalized parties. In other parties, it was only a general discussion about the selection of candidates, but the party rules showed that this mostly meant the selection of SMD candidates. Thus, it is not easy for many parties to know from the official party documents how the party lists are compiled. This suggests that list-making within parties is a very vague business and that probably only a few selectors know precisely how the lists are made.

Table 12 The candidate selection of different parties

	Centralization	Inclusiveness	Institutionalization
Párbeszéd	Decentralized	Exclusive	Institutionalized
DK	Decentralized	Exclusive	Institutionalized
Fidesz	Decentralized	Exclusive	Institutionalized
Jobbik	Decentralized	Exclusive	Non-institutionalized
Momentum	Centralized	Inclusive	Institutionalized
MSZP	Decentralized	Inclusive	Institutionalized
LMP	Centralized	Inclusive	Non-institutionalized

Source: Own elaboration based on the parties' statute

In terms of centralization, the candidate selection procedure of Momentum and LMP seems to be centralized. In contrast, the candidate selection procedure of Párbeszéd, DK, Fidesz, Jobbik, and MSZP can be considered more decentralized according to the formal rules. For Momentum and LMP, the selection of candidates is decided at the national level, and there is no specific role for local grassroots organizations. In fact, in Momentum, the National Presidium nominates the candidates. For the other parties with decentralized candidate selection, it can be observed that it is usually the local grassroots organization that nominates or proposes the candidates. Thus, there is a role for the local level in the candidate selection procedure. The MSZP is one of the most decentralized parties in Hungary in terms of nominating candidates because not only does the local organization nominate the candidates, but also the local organization must ask the local membership for their opinion on the candidates. At the same time, the compilation of party lists of both the Fidesz and the MSZP is relatively centralized.

As for the selectors, Párbeszéd, DK, Fidesz, and Jobbik have exclusive candidate selection procedures, while Momentum, MSZP, and LMP seem more inclusive. In most parties whose candidate selection procedures are considered exclusive, the party leaders at the national level decide who runs in the parliamentary elections, and party members do not seem to have much say in the selection of the candidates. In the case of Momentum, MSZP, and LMP, the Congress or the general assembly decides on the candidates, which means that the selectors are composed of a much wider group. On the other hand, Párbeszéd's

candidate selection procedure can be seen as inclusive because although the national party leadership decides on the selection of candidates, the local level has veto power.

Based on the party statutes, it can be said that in most parties, the nomination of candidates is more institutionalized than not. In most parties, it is clear where the nomination of candidates takes place and who is involved. However, there are differences between parties in the level of institutionalization. For example, the statute of Momentum states that the Delegates' Assembly is composed of exactly 80 people, while other parties do not specify how many people make up their Congress. On the other hand, Jobbik and LMP have the least institutionalized candidate selection procedures. It is not clear from the party statutes what the exact role of specific party units in the candidate selection procedure is for these parties.

Overall, it can be concluded that for some parties, the candidate selection procedure is highly institutionalized, while for others, it is less regulated, leaving more room for informal rules. However, also the formal rules vary from party to party, which may have a different impact on the gender composition of candidates in each party. Furthermore, in the case of the MSZP and LMP, there was a specific provision in the party statutes that they would seek to have both genders represented among the candidates. The MSZP has a 20 percent gender quota, while the LMP has a rule that no more than two of the same sex candidates may be elected consecutively from the second place on the candidate list. Apart from the MSZP and LMP, two other parties, DK and Párbeszéd have rules requiring a certain proportion of women in party leadership. These gender rules signal that these parties are committed to more excellent political representation for women.

I now turn to the analysis of the interview data. In this section, I examine whether the participants involved in the candidate selection procedure consider that it is indeed carried out according to the party's statutes or whether they experience any discrepancies, and if so, what their experiences are.

4.2 Informal Norms Override the Formal Rules

The interviews suggest that while formal rules govern the selection of candidates, informal norms play a significant role in determining who becomes a candidate in most parties. In other words, there is a significant gap between how parties select candidates on paper, according to the official rules, and how candidates are selected in practice. Therefore, to fully understand the candidate selection procedure, it is not enough to examine only the formal rules but also the informal dimensions and practices.

Overall, most interviews suggest that although parties have formal rules, candidates are rarely nominated according to formal rules. This is because informal norms usually interfere with formal rules, while the parties are less committed to the formal rules written in their party statutes. Based on the interviews conducted with aspirants, candidates, representatives, and selectors, informal practices dominating the candidate selection procedures tend to appear in different forms. First, the selections and nominations of candidates are relatively centralized and predetermined in some parties, regardless of what is stated in the party statute. For example, party leaders decide who the candidates can be individually or in a small group.

Furthermore, party leaders, nationally well-known politicians, or party favorites are systematically placed in the first places on the list even though there is a regular list-making procedure. This decides in advance, de facto automatically, who will be at the top of the list. Only a few parties seem to be exceptions to this. In addition, even in single-member districts where the parties know they will win, the parties tend to run well-known, primarily male politicians. This is also because, apart from a few smaller parties, most parties do not have women leaders or many well-known women politicians. Therefore, if famous politicians and party leaders are systematically placed at the top of the list or are run in single-member districts that the party can win, the result is that few women can win seats at all.

Second, according to the interviews, lobbying and building personal networks to gain candidacy is a significant part of the political culture of most parties. This puts women at a disadvantage because they have fewer resources and time due to traditional gender roles in society. The interviewees suggest that the Hungarian society still has strong traditional attitudes towards gender roles, which means that women carry a heavy burden of invisible domestic work. Both male and female politicians acknowledged during interviews that because of the gender roles assigned to women, female politicians could not participate in informal meetings and networking, which is often required from people running for office. In contrast, their male counterparts can better meet these expectations because they do not have to perform in two places simultaneously. The interviewees suggested that even when women are invited to these informal events, they are often unable to attend them because such events are often after work, in the evening, when it is expected for female politicians to be at home with their families and children.

4.2.1 The Role of Party Leaders

First, respondents confirmed that party leadership in most parties strongly influences deciding who should be on the list, even in parties where the candidate selection is decentralized or inclusive according to the formal rules. Momentum, for example, has a centralized but inclusive selection of candidates according to formal rules. The interviews confirmed that the national presidium proposes a list, but the 82-member assembly of delegates must approve it or has the right to propose a new list. However, when, at the last election, the assembly of delegates drew up a list that many were not happy with, the presidium was able to intervene. Thus, in principle, the assembly of delegates has more formal power to decide on the candidates, but the national presidium can influence them. In the words of a member of the party leadership:

> "At the Delegates Assembly, a party list did not reflect the majority opinion. The downside of preferential voting is that those in the middle are favored, and those who are popular but have one or two detractors are ranked lower. The proposed list suddenly confronted everyone because it was mostly composed of educated young men from Budapest. There were few women and rural candidates on the list. The Presidium, therefore, proposed a specific person to be moved up the list, or they will submit a completely revised list." (Judit, Momentum)

As there were hardly any women or rural candidates on the party list proposed by the assembly of delegates, the national Presidium proposed a candidate at the top of the list who met these two criteria. Judit's quote confirms the assumption in the literature that sometimes, a narrower, more exclusive group can achieve representational goals more easily than a larger group where many other considerations prevail. Although in this case, instead of nominating at least one rural and one female candidate separately, they ticked off these two criteria with one person.

The fact that parties are more decentralized or inclusive on paper but more centralized and exclusive in practice can be seen in the single-member districts and parties with the most institutionalized candidate selection procedures. Jobbik, for example, has a very institutionalized selection procedure, and according to their formal rules, local party organizations have the right to nominate candidates in the single-member districts. However, one interviewee argued that the national party leadership sometimes recommends candidates to the local organization against the wishes of the local organization or even nominates candidates in a particular single-member district. Dániel explained that the national party

leadership nominated him in a district where he had no previous experience or any connection with the district. The respondent, however, stressed that his nomination in the given electoral district was not without merit:

> "The national party leadership thought that I was doing an excellent job. This is how I came to their attention. I did not knock on their door and said here I am, nominate me somewhere." (Dániel, Jobbik)

This case also shows that informal rules and norms prevail even in parties with the most institutionalized and well-described candidate selection procedures. It is also evident in all parties that knowing the national party leadership and having an excellent personal relationship with the formal leaders can help someone become a candidate. However, obtaining nominations this way does not necessarily mean that these candidates selected by the central party leadership are not qualified for the candidacy. Even in Jobbik, party leaders seem to have nominated Dániel on merit and performance over a local candidate. This is confirmed by another interviewee who argues:

> "I have not seen many examples of someone getting a place on the party list just because they are someone's friend, without merit. It is all about human quality and performance." (Gergely, MSZP)

However, the interviews also point out that there may be even more scope for candidates to be selected informally with less formalized parties on paper. The party statute of LMP is among the least institutionalized in the candidate selection procedure. One of the party's politicians told me that the former party president influenced who should be nominated long after he was no longer president:

> "It is an interesting situation when the boundaries of a single-member district do not cover the scope of the regional organization. In Budapest, there is a single-member district within the scope of two regional organizations, which meant that two potential candidates could have been put forward during the 2018 elections. However, I think András (former party president) had a say because it was his constituency. I think he might have proposed Csárdi, and then he must have been accepted by the others. András did not have a voice in public, but he still had a voice in the background. There are people through whom he can make his voice heard, tell them his position, and they will then bring it into the party." (Andrea, LMP)

Another politician suggested that there are parties where the party leader has the sole power to decide on candidates. However, this party leader considers what the aspirants themselves want. According to a DK politician

> "The president asked everyone years before the election: who had what ambitions and what they wanted to do. Everybody could say what they wanted to do, and I could also say it. From that point of view, the candidate selection procedure was transparent." (Kata, DK)

4.2.2 Predetermined Party List Compilation

In most parties, respondents pointed out that the national party leaders often occupy the top positions on party lists. This predetermined mechanism is not formally enshrined in party statutes but seems to be widely known and accepted by party officials. It is also interesting to note that party leaders nominate themselves for top positions in many cases, as they are often the selectors. This is how party lists are informally constructed in most parties in Hungary. The only exception is if there is a specific agreement on list-making. According to an interviewee, in the case of Momentum, for example, in the last elections, they agreed that those candidates who stood in single-member districts could not be at the top of the party list. However, in the previous elections in 2018, the Presidium members were nominated to the top of the list. The parties seem to draw up lists and rankings based on their internal strengths. As one politician put it:

> "Those who are the big names, typically party leaders, prime ministerial candidates, will be at the top of the list." (Gergely, MSZP)

Interestingly, both candidates and selectors, both women and men, seem to accept this predetermined list compilation as a basic premise that cannot be challenged. In the words of a local politician who is also a member of the national party leadership:

> "Members of the party's governing body and members of the party leadership are automatically placed at the top of the list. They are the party's leading politicians, so in most cases, they deserve it." (Bella, P)

This quote indicates that female politicians may also believe that these party leaders, who are usually male, deserve to be at the top of the list. At the same time, this predetermined procedure of nominating party leaders for top positions results in few women getting winnable positions on party lists, as there are usually far fewer women than men in party leadership. Therefore, women must first take up formal leadership positions in political

parties if they want to receive nominations for winnable seats on party lists. Otherwise, men will continue to be at the top of the list, and women will likely be further down the list. Previous studies have found that the presence of women among party leaders is positively correlated with increased representation of women in the legislature (Cheng and Tavits 2011; Wauters and Pilet 2015). However, a female legislator who holds a leadership position in a party was less optimistic about the potential leadership positions women could hold in political parties. She suggested that a limited number of women could reach the top. As Hanna argues:

> "We [women] are aware of how far we can go. I usually say that I have come so far from a social environment that few people would have been able to. So, I am satisfied now. If I were a man, I would have a different view, but as a woman, I think I will get out of politics much sooner than my male counterparts." (Hanna, MSZP)

She made it clear during the interview that she would leave parliamentary politics earlier than men despite being a successful politician in her party. It seemed to me that she felt it was necessary because of family circumstances and commitments. She talked about women in general as if women can only be involved in politics for a certain period because their family commitments do not allow them to stay in politics for a long time. This is in line with previous research suggesting that men are more likely to serve more terms in the Hungarian parliament than women and thus gain an electoral advantage among incumbent representatives (Kurtán and Ilonszki 2011).

The fact that candidate selection has become a predetermined procedure also suggests that the structure of party lists remains almost the same from election to election unless there is some fluctuation in party leadership. In general, leadership turnover is not so high, and mostly male leaders replace primarily male leaders. The exception was, for example, the case of Momentum, where two female politicians, Anna Orosz and Anna Donáth, ran for the party leadership position after the previous male party leader, András-Fekete Győr, resigned because of performing poorly in the primaries. Eventually, Anna Donáth replaced András Fekete-Győr. It was a rare political story, with two women running against each other for the presidency and almost no men present. However, this situation is in line with a phenomenon known in the literature as the glass cliff. The glass cliff theory suggests that women can sometimes only become leaders when the organization is in crisis (Kulich, Ryan, and Haslam 2014; Palmer and Simon 2006; Rink, Ryan, and Stoker 2012; Ryan, Haslam, and Kulich 2010). While the party has since entered parliament for the first time in its history, and

shortly afterward, there was another election in which Anna Donáth decided not to stand because of her pregnancy, and only men applied to be party leaders. Thus, Momentum has a male president again.

On the other hand, Fidesz is an excellent example of this stagnation of female party leaders, as they keep one seat for a woman in the five-member party leadership, with the other four positions always filled by male leaders. In other words, the number of women in the leadership of Fidesz does not change or increase. It is just that women rotate in the same position from time to time. However, it is essential to note that the predetermined selection and nomination of party leaders to top posts on the list may disadvantage women and male newcomers.

4.2.3 Intra-party Networks and Lobbying

Many interviewees stressed that personal contacts and the ability to build a professional and personal network of contacts are essential in politics, especially when selecting candidates and getting nominations. According to respondents, politics in Hungary is all about building personal relationships, which need to be nurtured on an ongoing basis. In fact, without lobbying, practically no one can become a candidate. When I asked an interviewee why less visible politicians are higher up on the party list while more visible politicians are ranked lower, she gave me the following quick answer:

> "Lobbying and popularity. But popularity also includes performance." (Judit, Momentum).

Being at the back of the list means that that person is not popular enough within the party to be at the top of the list, or they have not had enough coffee with the delegates. The same interviewee explained that in lobbying, what matters is 1) How visible a delegate's work is as a politician in the party, 2) How opinion forming the delegate is within the delegate assembly, 3) How much coffee someone has with others before the delegate assembly 4) In general how much partying is done with others. Judit stressed that a candidate must focus on all these aspects because there is no other way to get a good candidacy. In other words, an aspirant must have coffee and party with delegates at the same time, and preferably with people who are opinion leaders, to receive a winnable position on the party list. Another politician from the party confirmed that popularity and lobbying are significant in the party. In his words:

> "What is wrong is that it is not performance per se that matters; it is popularity. This is, of course, a kind of achievement. Still, as a member of the board, you are very much concerned with making the voice of the rural people heard here or there or with the operational well-being of the organization. You do much work in this, but you are not so popular if you do not go out for coffee with the opinion leaders. That puts you in a worse position. Especially if you do not like to be nice, such as taking photos with people, which disgusts me, and I am not going to do that. However, it is a competitive disadvantage." (Ádám, Momentum).

Lobbying can sometimes seem even more complicated when someone needs to know the important people in their party and other parties. In recent years, the Hungarian elections have been characterized by several left-wing parties running together, i.e., coordinating the selection of candidates. This meant that candidates had to lobby the other parties. One respondent saw lobbying in practice from two sides: a candidate and a board member. In his words:

> ""During coordination meetings, you had to know whom you were lobbying for. I occasionally was involved in one of these conversations and always knew whom to talk to. They were informal, texting, calling, and Facebook chatting. I had a lot of coffee with many people. You do not have to imagine blackmail. There is nothing sinful about that. Moreover, when I became a board member, my phone kept ringing. From 7 in the morning to 10 at night, they never said sorry to bother you, and they always wanted something, somebody always wanted something." (László, Együtt)

Another respondent similarly argues that lobbying is a natural thing to do. He also explains why it is so strong in the MSZP:

> "Lobbying is everywhere. It is not a devil. Lobbying is campaigning within the party, where the candidate's program and personality matter. We have several platforms within the party that have different values. If there is a power group within a party that says that these values are important to us, that this person represents, then it is obvious that these people are fighting for this candidate. The party's policies must reflect their values more characteristically for these platforms." (Gergely, MSZP)

Interestingly, it was mainly men who said that lobbying in politics was a completely normal and natural procedure. At the same time, women tended to highlight the negative impact of lobbying or informal groups in many cases. One respondent, however, points out that she believes that someone cannot get ahead in politics without personal connections and

that certain groups dominating the candidate pool are not a positive aspect. She believes the reason for this is that:

> "Hungarian politics is characterized by 'camarillas'. And camarilla politics, which is a specific element of politics, is also present in Hungarian parties." (Nóra, MSZP)

Camarilla politics refers to the fact that the party leader is surrounded by a group of individuals who, while not necessarily holding office or formal power, influence the leader behind the scenes. This group plays a particularly significant role in determining who becomes a candidate or leader. The term has been used in Mexico to describe politics, where a small pool of individuals exercised political power rather than the electorate or the party members (Camp 1990). Another politician confirmed that parties often have different stakeholders, and there are always certain groups who take control and get to decide on the more critical issues. In her words:

> "There have always been big battles within the MSZP. In one period, a prominent politician and his team could decide everything by majority vote. They suppressed those who were not one of them." (Kata, DK)

Another politician said he left a previous party because people more loyal to the leaders were put in positions there, even though they were less talented and skillful than others.

> "There was a nine-member presidency. However, two of the leaders always moved together, and they had a brigade who always voted the way they wanted, and it was quite easy to make decisions there because there was no democratic debate." (Ádám, Momentum)

Overall, an individual's ability to move up the political ladder is related to their ability to build personal relationships and make friends in politics, especially in their party, who could themselves move up the political ladder. However, building relationships and lobbying requires a lot of resources and time. As Anna explains:

> "Politics is all about human relations. It means always talking to someone, always making new contacts, nurturing, and maintaining old ones. But this is extremely time-consuming." (Anna, DK)

Anna highlights that fostering these relationships takes significant time and resources. Nevertheless, research shows that women suffer from time poverty, meaning that they have less time and resources than men because of the gender role expectations and caring

responsibilities that women must fulfill. The interviewees suggest that it is often not the case that men directly exclude women, but simply that it is difficult for female politicians to reconcile family and work life. More specifically, it is women politicians with children who are often unable to attend informal events, which provide an excellent opportunity to build personal relationships because of family commitments. In the words of one female respondent:

> "After long hours in Parliament, I just want to go home to my children. So, for example, I could never join an after-work pub crawl with colleagues." (Diána, Jobbik)

Another politician also reported that women find it harder to get the relationships they need to succeed in politics. She said:

> "A woman cannot attend, say, an evening background meeting because it is obvious that as a woman, she will go home to her family and not stay there at night. For example, there is currently an intra-party election, and there are background meetings to decide which line of force to support, which often means going out for dinner with people. As a woman, you often have to say no, and essentially these background meetings are crucial because they give you extra information and discussions that you need to hear and know." (Hanna, MSZP)

Moreover, Hanna also suggests that women are failing to make and build personal relationships and missing out on much information that could be useful to them because of their responsibilities at home. Previous gender research in Hungary, for example, on the glass ceiling and gender pay gap, suggests that childbearing and motherhood often contribute to the inequality between women and men (Munkaerőpiaci Tükör 2017, 2018). However, according to the interviewees, women not only have less time because of family responsibilities but also have fewer resources to build the personal relationships they need. Therefore, it turns out that during the candidate selection procedure, women need extra help to persuade supporters within the party to nominate them, which they often lack. Two interviewees explain it as follows:

> "During the candidate selection procedure, people are offered positions and jobs with money in exchange for their votes." (Andrea, LMP)

> "People with official positions have the resources to offer things in exchange for political support, and women do not have access to these resources." (Barbara, Liberálisok)

These quotes suggest that incumbent politicians are advantageous in the candidate selection procedure. Incumbent politicians can more easily gain candidacy because they gain resources they can offer in return for support once in office. In line with this, women are disadvantaged because there are few women among politicians already in positions with access to resources. Finally, according to one male respondent, there may be another reason that women are less able to build relationships in politics. In his view, women have fewer informal networks because they cannot manage conflicts with their colleagues:

> "You cannot be a candidate if you do not accept nominations from people with whom you have had conflicts. Some women do not seek nominations from people who have sometimes hurt them or made sexist remarks about them. This is not the case for men. He will negotiate with anyone if it is in a man's interest. Women do politics on values, which is noble, but the nobility is not effective in politics. In politics, you must build coalitions." (Péter, P)

Peter is talking about the different socialization of women and men, which in many cases can be disadvantageous for women in politics. However, his opinion of female politicians has some generalization and sexism. However, his statement emphasizes that it could be challenging to build intra-party relationships for women because of the prejudice against women. Political parties are not free from the sexism that often prevails in other areas of life. One female candidate also mentioned that when they revealed her candidacy, one local party leader said to her:

> "We would have preferred to have MSZP boys instead of you." (Local leader, MSZP)

This quote still suggests that people have prejudices against women politicians because of their gender. Furthermore, no matter how competent or reliable this female candidate is, some selectors often want to see men as candidates regardless of their qualifications.

4.2.4 Gendered Physical Areas

According to interviews, essential decisions in candidate selection, such as who should be the candidate, are often made in secret circles rather than through official channels, and women are often excluded for distinct reasons. First, there seem to be specific physical places or events where women politicians are not invited and therefore cannot participate, even if they would like to. According to one respondent:

> "Women are excluded from the areas where important decisions are made, such as toilets, pubs, and football matches. Only official platforms such as presidential and parliamentary meetings are left for women." (Nóra, MSZP)

Nora explained that she would not run into the men's room after the men. In theory, she could, but obviously, she will not. However, men often come out of there with decisions that women have no say in. Another respondent made a similar point, noting that:

> "Men play tennis together, and they do not invite to such events. At least they do not smoke cigars like they used to. Tennis is healthier than cigars." (Barbara, Liberálisok)

The proportion of men in the Hungarian parliament has been stable at around 90 percent for the past 30 years. This male domination might have created mechanisms in which men are more likely to prevail because of gender socialization. Men are used to doing activities that are considered more masculine, which already excludes women. Playing tennis or football has become the norm and habit that those working in politics have become used to. However, these do not change because few newcomers, such as women, are allowed in. Male politicians do not even think about changing these habits and norms and organizing more events and activities where women would be more likely to participate. For these habits and norms to change, men must realize that they belong to a privileged group, which is not in their interest. Prime Minister Viktor Orbán made a very open and transparent point about this in a radio interview:

> "Before the UEFA European Football Championship, the government members set up a betting office, as is customary in such a male-dominated community."

4.3 Discussion

In this chapter, I first examined how the candidate selection procedure in the various political parties in Hungary is conducted according to the formal rules described in the party statutes. The analysis of party statutes has revealed that formal rules offer different opportunities and obstacles for women to become candidates first and then MPs. However, examining party rules and formal rules alone is not enough. One reason for this is that previous studies have shown that there is sometimes a considerable gap between the formal structure of parties and the actual practical functioning of the organization (Freidenberg and Levitsky 2006). Another reason for this is that when examining the formal rules laid down in the party constitution, some parties operate very similarly to the formal rules. Yet, the presence of women at each party is quite different. This raises the question, why, even though the parties have the same

formal rules, the proportion of women in them is different? This suggests that there is something that is not visible in the formal rules and yet has an impact on how parties nominate candidates. Therefore, I interviewed people involved in the candidate selection procedure, i.e., aspirants, candidates, representatives, and selectors. By analyzing the interview data, I investigated whether the candidate selection procedure follows the formal rules described in the parties' statutes or whether there are informal rules that interact with the formal rules. The interviews revealed how political parties select their candidates and how this affects women's representation. To summarize, the parties' candidate selection procedure is quite heterogeneous according to party rules but relatively homogeneous according to the interviewees.

The party statutes show that the candidate selection procedure is a complex mechanism and that parties differ in how they select their candidates, at least according to the formal rules. Looking at the statutes of the parties, only Momentum and LMP's candidate selection procedure can be considered centralized. In contrast, the candidate selection procedure of Párbeszéd, DK, Fidesz, Jobbik, and MSZP can be considered decentralized. However, the findings of the interviews show that the candidate selection procedure is relatively centralized in all parties in practice, even in cases where the party's constitution states that the candidate selection procedure is decentralized. In Fidesz, for example, the nomination of candidates is formally decentralized, but in practice, the decision is in the hands of a personalized party chairman. Regarding inclusiveness, the party statutes show that Párbeszéd, DK, Fidesz, and Jobbik have an exclusive candidate selection procedure, while Momentum, MSZP, and LMP are more inclusive. However, the interviews show that even in parties with a more inclusive candidate selection procedure, the party leadership has a significant role in deciding who becomes a candidate. In other words, the Hungarian case also proves that the assumptions of a close fit between the formal structure of parties and the actual organization are inaccurate.

Furthermore, according to the party statutes, the candidate selection procedure is much more formal and transparent for Párbeszéd, DK, Fidesz, Momentum, and MSZP and less for Jobbik and LMP. Based on this, one could assume that there is more room for informal rules in the candidate selection procedure of these parties and the interviews confirm that informality indeed prevails in both parties. However, the interviews also suggest that, regardless of formal rules, informality plays a crucial role in selecting candidates for all parties, and informal rules often override formal rules. This is particularly the case for the selection of list candidates. Thus, institutionalizing the candidate selection procedure on

paper alone may not be beneficial for women's political representation. Mechanisms need to be put in place that genuinely helps to ensure that candidate selection is not decided in a football changing room or a parliamentary toilet.

Based on the interviews, the Hungarian case also confirms a group of previous case studies that emphasized the role of clientelism and informal networks in the candidate selection procedure (Bjarnegård 2013; Bjarnegård and Kenny 2016). In many cases, the decision-making power does not lie in the party's official governing bodies. However, a single leader or office-holding person decides about the candidates. Furthermore, even the decision-making in local organizations is sometimes not democratic because influential local leaders direct the selection procedure. The interviewees suggest that political parties' selection procedure often has unintended gender implications that disadvantage female candidates and representatives. According to the respondents, politics and the candidate selection procedure are about personal relationships and informal meetings. In these, women are more disadvantaged than men because, on the one hand, there are events and areas (e.g., tennis games, football matches, toilets) where men are more likely to be together and where critical issues are discussed. At the same time, they are often invited to, for example, social gatherings after work. However, women are less likely to attend these because they are expected to spend more time on other caring tasks than male politicians.

On the other hand, the results of the interviews also show that, despite the formal rules, the selection of candidates is pre-determined, and party leaders and favorites are usually at the top of the list. This does not benefit women, who are less likely to hold senior positions within the party. Thus, it is possible to conclude that informal aspects of the candidate selection procedure negatively affect women's political representation in Hungary.

5 Chapter: Party Primaries and Women's Representation

5.1 Introduction

I study the relationship between party primaries and women's political representation in this chapter. This is because primaries can be seen as a decentralized, inclusive, and institutionalized candidate selection procedure. The previous empirical chapters in this dissertation have suggested that these dimensions of candidate selection lead to higher parliamentary representation of women. Thus, I can test in a quasi-natural experiment whether this form of candidate selection is more conducive to women's political

representation. More specifically, I analyze the effect of opposition primaries on women's chances of becoming candidates for the 2022 parliamentary elections in Hungary. By doing so, I contribute to an ongoing debate about the possible trade-off between the democratic values of the 'inclusion' of party members and voters and the 'representation' of excluded groups such as women that this type of selection method might involve. Chapter 4 showed that these two values of democracy, i.e., inclusiveness and representativeness are not incompatible. In this chapter, I explore them further by an in-depth analysis of the primaries.

In countries like Hungary, where there is no specific gender quota for the party list and the majoritarian tier dominates the electoral system, understanding women's political representation requires focusing on candidate selection and political parties' nomination. The primaries offer an opportunity to examine a specific type of candidate selection, where candidates are chosen partly by the parties and partly by the voters. In the primaries, parties first select the aspirants who wish to become candidates, but the voters decide on candidates. Thus, the primaries play a crucial role in women's access to parliament, as this is when the final selection of candidates takes place. Moreover, some electoral districts are known to be winnable or "safe" for a particular party. Therefore the outcome of this primary election may be the same as the general election's outcome. Therefore, it also matters which candidates the parties run in districts considered safe or less safe for their party.

Primaries are usually seen as having the potential to democratize political competition, as it is partly in the hands of the voters to choose the candidate (they like from among the aspirants of a given party) who will eventually run in the parliamentary elections. Thus, involving voters at an earlier stage may be seen as a more democratic institution than parliamentary elections alone. Indriðason and Kristinsson (2015, 570) suggest that including party members in deciding who the candidates should be might mobilize more women and potentially break former barriers to women's representation. On the other hand, a candidate selection procedure, which is not open to party members and party lists that are decided by a small network of party insiders – historically and predominantly men – is more likely to favor men.

In contrast, it is often argued that the inclusiveness of the candidate selection procedure may be at the expense of another important aspect of democracy, the representational goals. In other words, if more people are involved in the selection of candidates and thus, the selection of candidates becomes inclusive, the representational aspect might be

overshadowed. Examining candidate selection procedures in Israel, Rahat, Hazan, and Katz (2008) find that parties with inclusive selectors (i.e., party members) produced a candidate pool that was not representative in terms of gender. Therefore, they argue that these democratic values, such as inclusiveness and representativeness, might be unable to be simultaneously maximized within a single political party. In other words, there could be a trade-off between the two important aspects of democracy, 'inclusiveness' and 'representativeness'. Recently, by taking the Italian 2013 elections as a case study, Pansardi and Pinto (2020) argue that inclusive selection methods, such as open primaries, increase female candidates' chances of getting elected in comparison to other, more exclusive methods, such as selection by party leadership. In contrast, Astudillo and Paneque (2022) suggest that female candidates perform worse under party primaries, thus there is a trade-off between 'inclusion' and 'representation'. However, in *Chapter 4*, I have shown that inclusive selection procedures may result in a higher representation of women in parliament than exclusive candidate selection methods. Thus, the question remains do primaries punish or benefit women? Nevertheless, a new analysis of party primaries may be able to decide the debate on whether an inclusive candidate selection is more conducive to improving the representation of women in politics than an exclusive candidate selection.

Due to the specificity of the new Hungarian electoral system, the opposition parties have decided that they have the best chance of replacing the governing party if they do not compete with each other but instead run a joint candidate in the single-member districts. To decide which party's candidate should stand in each single-member district, the opposition parties organized the opposition primaries between 18-28 September 2021 and 10-16 October 2021. This allows me to make a completely new contribution to this debate because most studies focus on the primaries of a single party. However, I do not only examine the selection of candidates within a single party, but I analyze an innovative primary election where voters select a candidate from among several aspirants of different parties running in single-member districts. Since these primaries are held in single-member districts, the chapter may also answer the question of whether or not single-member district elections always offer women worse opportunities. As mentioned before, there is a widespread view that single-member district elections potentially allow gender to be a more influential factor in the voting decision, which can hinder women's electoral chances (Norris 1987). Moreover, some argue that the fierce competition in single-member districts can make female candidates less willing

to run for office. This chapter may also answer the question of whether primaries can reduce the negative impact of single-member district elections on women's political representation.

Therefore, in these primaries, the voters had the privilege to decide who the opposition prime minister candidate and the joint SMD candidate would be in the national. In other words, for the 2022 Hungary parliamentary elections, a coalition was formed with a joint candidate for prime minister and a joint candidate for each single-member district, supported by all the opposition parties participating in the primaries. Such a primary has never been held in Hungary before and is therefore seen by many as a political innovation. Among the opposition parties, DK, Jobbik, Momentum, MSZP, LMP, and Párbeszéd have decided to run together and compete with the governing Fidesz-KDNP parties' candidates in the 2022 Hungarian parliamentary elections. This coalition had to be formed because of the reform of the electoral system. It was considered that the coalition gave them a mathematical chance of replacing the ruling party if they did not run against each other.

Another contribution of this chapter is the research strategy. Previous studies on women's representation tended to focus mainly on the outcome, i.e., who are the representatives? However, this chapter examines an earlier stage in the candidate selection procedure. Specifically, how aspirants become candidates and which candidates are standing in a constituency where they have a good chance of getting into parliament and becoming an MP in the general elections. This chapter provides a multivariate analysis of how female aspirants perform relative to male aspirants to become candidates in single-member districts in a primary election procedure. This chapter also contributes to finding out whether the problem of women's underrepresentation in politics is due to the supply side or it is a demand-side problem.

The analysis of the 2021 Hungarian primaries is particularly important for the representation of women because all parties in the six opposition parties, except for Jobbik, can be considered left-wing, green, or liberal. Many times in the previous chapters mentioned that there is a consensus in the political science literature that left-wing parties and modernizing parties are more open to nominating women. Thus, by examining the primaries, the question may be answered: how do the left-wing opposition parties perform in terms of women's political representation? The primaries are an opportunity to examine whether all left-wing parties are more open to women's representation or whether there are differences between left-wing parties in their commitment to women's representation. The main question

in this chapter is: do primaries offer better chances for female aspirants to become candidates and then MPs than regular parliamentary elections? To answer this question, I use multivariate models to examine the proportion of female aspirants and candidates in opposition primaries, the constituencies in which they run, and their characteristics such as age or gender and political characteristics such as political and electoral experience that may lead to their selection as candidates.

In this chapter, I first briefly outline the literature on primaries and women's representation, and I also introduce the hypotheses I have put forward based on the literature. I then present the data and the analysis. Finally, I discuss the outputs of the models.

5.2 Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

In this chapter, I examine how the more democratic candidate selection and nomination procedure, the primaries, affect the chances of female aspirants becoming candidates. Examining primaries offers an opportunity to check the hypotheses in the previous chapters and revisit an old debate about the trade-off between inclusiveness and representativeness.

Since primaries have become common in some countries, such as the U.S., this inclusive candidate selection procedure has received much academic attention (Cross et al. 2016; Sandri, Seddone, and Venturino 2015). Making candidate selection more democratic by opening the nomination procedure to party members and voters seems to be a long-desired goal. Opinion polls in the U.S. show that citizens are open to primaries (Young and Cross 2002), while researchers are skeptical about their impact (Cross et al. 2016). Among scholars, some scholars consider primaries as a positive initiative in that they push politics in a more participatory direction (Kittilson and Scarrow 2003). Others see them as a tool for party leaders to reduce the influence of ideologically radical party activists and increase the influence of less active and more moderate party members (Mair 1997b, 149). However, many have also argued that primaries and intra-party democracy are multidimensional concepts (Von dem Berge et al. 2013) and that some democratic values may reduce other democratic values (Cross and Katz 2013, 3).

According to the literature on the political parties, the type of candidate selection used in nominating and selecting candidates impacts the proportion of women elected to parliament. The main concern from women's representational point of view is that there may be a trade-off between the 'inclusiveness' and 'representativeness of the democratic values (Rahat, Hazan, and Katz 2008). Rahat et al. (2008) argue that by making the candidate

selection procedure more open and inclusive, it may become even more difficult to be represented for groups previously underrepresented in politics. In inclusive (and decentralized) candidate selection, atomized and anonymous individuals decide who should be the candidate. Therefore, meaningful consideration of improving the representation of certain under-represented groups is less likely to happen (Astudillo and Paneque 2022). On the other hand, it is argued that exclusive selectors are more able to pursue these interests if they want to. Of course, the focus is on whether there is the political will to increase the number of women in parliament because if there is not, then the exclusive selection is not suitable for women per se.

Since Rahat et al. (2008), other scholars have analyzed this dilemma in the selection of candidates (Pruysers et al. 2017) and the selection of party leaders as well (Astudillo and Paneque 2022; Cross et al. 2016; Verge and Astudillo 2019; Wauters and Pilet 2015). However, these studies do not yet point clearly in one direction. In Chapter 4, I examined the candidate selection procedures of several parties. I found that inclusive and decentralized candidate selection may lead to higher political representation of women than exclusive and centralized candidate selection procedures. Thus, it is not yet concluded that different democratic values cannot be maximized in a single institution, as some scholars (e.g. (Rahat, Hazan, and Katz 2008, 676) suggest.

Empirical studies examining this stage of the candidate selection procedure on women's representation in parliament is still scarce. One limitation of current research on women's representation is that, because it is difficult to obtain data on aspirants and candidates, most research focuses on final representatives and candidates. As a result, these studies fail to capture how aspirants become candidates and representatives, although this procedure may differ for men and women. However, even less is known about the aspirants in general, especially those who do not become candidates or representatives at the end of the selection and nomination procedure. Nevertheless, to understand what traits and characteristics aspirants and candidates should have to increase their chances of becoming representatives, the pool that includes those who run, those who win, and those who lose should be examined (Lawless and Pearson 2008). Fortunately, the Hungarian opposition primaries offer a unique opportunity to test this. In most cases, it is difficult to grasp the size and composition of the aspirants. However, in this opposition primary election, it is possible to analyze the aspirants and see who the winning aspirants are and which candidates may become representatives.

The main goal of this chapter is to study whether a more decentralized, inclusive, and institutionalized candidate selection, i.e., primaries, offers women a better chance to become candidates or not. However, the primaries are not entirely free from the possible gendered selection effects of parties, as parties themselves nominate most aspirants. Nevertheless, the voters, rather than the parties, decide on the aspirants. However, the primaries suggest an image of fairness or an idea that they may change the status quo of men. Thus, female candidates may think their chances of winning the nomination are much greater under primaries than when only party selectors decide about the candidates without primaries.

Moreover, female aspirants may be more motivated and encouraged because left parties organize the primaries. They, therefore, may assume that these parties' voters are more open to women's political representation. Fulton et al. (2006) suggest that when the expected benefit of an electoral office is predicted to be a favorable outcome, female candidates are significantly more likely than their male counterparts to run for Congress in the US. They assume that women are more strategic in their decisions about becoming a candidate and are more responsive to the expected benefit than men. Furthermore, not only political parties' aspirants were allowed to stand as candidates in the primaries under scrutiny, but also independent 'civil' aspirants could stand on their own. Since many women are active in civil society organizations, this might have further encouraged women to stand in the primaries. On this basis,

> *H1: I assume more women will stand in the primaries than in the previous election in single-member districts.*

Previous research has shown that citizens consume less political news and thus have less political information than before (Lawless and Pearson 2008). For this reason, they tend to use different heuristic cues or shortcuts to decide which candidate to vote for (Atudillo and Paneque 2021). In general elections, voters typically use parties as cues when deciding on candidates. However, in a usual primary election, the choice is between candidates of the same party, so the party alone cannot be a cue to help voters decide which candidate they should support. However, in the Hungarian primaries, the choice is not between aspirants from one party but between aspirants from different opposition parties. Therefore the party cue may play the most fundamental role in deciding which aspirants they should choose. Thus, the gender of the candidate is likely to be less important for voters. On this basis, I hypothesize that

H2: The vote share received by male and female candidates is not affected by their gender but by the party variable.

According to the US literature, during the primaries, the parties and candidates running in the primaries are followed by a lot of media attention, and the media focuses more on the male candidates' campaigns (Baitinger 2015). Name recognition means that voters in the primaries know the candidate. Through the media and political connections, voters become aware of the politicians' names. However, women may have a more challenging time gaining name recognition than men because they are less familiar with political circles and appear less in the media (Lawless and Pearson 2008). Nevertheless, these facts suggest that women also have fewer opportunities to win in primaries. For this reason, it may be worth looking specifically at only those constituencies where at least one woman is running, i.e., those that can be considered mixed-gender races. On this basis, I hypothesize that

H3: In single-member districts with a mix of male and female aspirants, voters will tend to prefer men over women.

In these Hungarian primaries, as mentioned earlier, the parties first nominate aspirants, and voters can decide who the final candidate will be. The primaries examined in this chapter can also be considered unique because aspirants are not contesting within a single party but from different parties, all seeking to win a single-member district. This also means that, except for some civil aspirants, mainly parties have nominated these aspirants. However, it is unknown how the decisions were made about which aspirants were run in which district. For this reason, I assume that the parties are running their strongest candidates at this stage, as they aim for their candidate to win the candidacy in each single-member district and become the joint candidate for all opposition parties. Previous research on Hungarian elections (Tóth and Ilonszki 2015) suggests that parties view male candidates as more likely to win single-member districts than women.

For this reason, men are more likely to stand in single-member district elections than women. Moreover, it was well known before the primaries that in terms of the parliamentary elections, there are constituencies that the opposition parties consider to be "winnable" or "safe" for them, some that are considered "swing" districts, and some that they think the governing party will win, therefore "unwinnable" for them. Previous research shows that parties tend to run their male candidates in so-called safe districts, which are seen as more

winnable for the party, while women run in harder-to-win or unsafe districts (Stambough and O'Regan 2007; M. Thomas and Bodet 2013). On this basis,

> *H4: I assume that parties prefer to run their male candidates in districts perceived as safe for the party, while they prefer to run their female candidates in swing or less safe districts.*

5.3 Data and Variables

I have built a database of the aspirants running in the 2021 opposition primaries. The database includes information on the candidates' personal characteristics, such as gender and age, and political characteristics, such as political and electoral experiences. There are 253 cases in the database where the unit of analysis is a candidate running in the primaries. Most data was taken from the official website of the primaries[8] and the CVs (Curriculum Vitae), which are also available there. In many cases, I have supplemented this data with data from another database[9] and other data on the Internet containing detailed information on the candidates.

To test my hypotheses, I used both descriptive data and multivariate models. First, I describe what my dependent variables were in the multivariate models. I had three dependent variables. The main research question in the chapter was whether primaries offer better opportunities for women than general elections. In this section, I examine how gender affects candidates' chances in the primaries. I captured this using two variables. In the first model, I included the candidates' vote share received in the primaries as a dependent variable. In the second model, I took the candidates' ranking (that is, which places they gained in the primaries with the number of votes they received) as the dependent variable.[10] In the third model, I analyzed if gender influences which aspirant is nominated in 'winnable or 'less winnable' districts. Thus, the third was the type of single-member constituency. This is a categorical variable where 1=winnable district, 2=swing district, and 3=unwinnable district.

In the following, nine explanatory factors will be introduced that are hypothesized to influence candidates' placement or their chances of winning the primaries. During the election and voting procedure, voters are faced with an overflow of candidates and information about them. For this reason, instead of basing their decisions on all available information about candidates, they prefer to use different information cues or shortcuts.

[8] The website is available here: https://elovalasztas2021.hu/.
[9] The database is available here: https://www.gyimesilaszlo.hu/eloval/.
[10] I tested the same phenomenon using other variables for robustness, and similar results were obtained in the other models.

These cues allow them to reduce the transaction costs of gathering relevant political information and help them to make (informed) choices (Christensen et al. 2021).

Previous research has found that voters often use descriptive characteristics such as gender and age as informational shortcuts (Banducci and Karp 2000; Holli and Wass 2010). The most relevant variable because of this dissertation's topic is gender (1). The variable is coded as 0=male and 1=female. Based on the previous literature, in Hungarian politics and women's representation, it is expected that the gender of the candidate negatively influences the candidate's chances of winning the election. However, because of the unusual circumstances of the primaries, my assumption is that gender will not affect candidates' winning chances in these primaries. The party label matters more in voters' decisions. Previous studies on candidate features and candidate selection patterns in Hungary (Papp 2017) also suggest that the age of candidates may well matter. Thus age had to be considered as well (2). Papp (2017) finds that selectors punish older candidates by placing them lower on party lists. However, the selection of list candidates and SMD candidates may be different. This analysis allows us to examine whether or not the logic of list compilation is similar to the candidate selection procedures in single-member districts.

Secondly, voters also use the previous experience as informational shortcuts (Cox and Katz 1996; Feld and Grofman 1991). More recent research (Chiru and Popescu 2017; Papp 2017) suggests that political and electoral experiences influence aspirants' chances of becoming candidates. These experiences are, therefore, captured with the following four variables. Being an MP when standing for election gives the candidate more visibility and popularity, which can affect their vote share. Thus, I hypothesized that being a national representative might affect the dependent variables (3). The national representative variable is coded as 0=no national representative, 1=national representative. Similarly, the parties' national leaders have great visibility and are also considered influential people within the party who are often the selectors themselves. Their position might allow them to run in a district with a good chance of winning. Thus, it is important to consider the effect of being a national leader (4). This variable is coded as 0=no national leader, 1=national leader.

In addition, according to several researchers, voters mostly choose parties, but at the same time, they prefer candidates who are familiar with the peculiarities of the local scenery (Putnam 1976; Matthew Søberg Shugart, Valdini, and Suominen 2005; Tavits 2010). Local representatives and parties' local leaders have extended local connections, the knowledge of

locally relevant issues, and the local electoral base, which matters when it comes to elections in single-member districts. These factors make them great candidates for the parties, but they are also an advantage when it comes to voting. Therefore, the fifth variable is being a local representative, and this variable is coded as 0=no local representative, 1=local representative. The sixth variable is whether someone was a local party leader at the time of the election or not (6). This variable is coded as 0=no local party leader, 1=local party leader.

The starting position of a candidate running in the primaries is also relevant. In other words, whether someone runs from the position of an incumbent or one of the challengers (7). This variable captures if someone has won in the given single-member district at the previous election, and it is coded as 0=no incumbent and 1=incumbent. However, several candidates stood in the same single-member district in the previous election but did not win. It can be assumed that these candidates have gained some electoral experience and visibility in the previous election and are more familiar with the constituency than the newcomers. These factors can work to their advantage. Thus, one must consider the effect of standing in the previous election in a particular single-member district (8). This variable is coded as 0=no recurring candidate, 1=recurring candidate.

As mentioned previously, voters use information shortcuts, such as party labels (Huddy, Bankert, and Davies 2018) and the candidate's likelihood of winning a mandate (Gschwend, Stoiber, and Günther 2004) to decide which candidates to vote for. Thus, endorsements of a specific party can provide a robust information heuristic when voters need to choose from an ample supply of candidates. In addition, the parties' past election results can indicate how likely a candidate is to win a seat. Thus, it is essential to control for the effect of the party (9). To construct this variable, I have used the sum of the vote shares of the candidates' supporting parties at the 2019 European Parliament (EP) elections. I have chosen the 2019 European Parliament election results because that election is the most like the primaries. The reason is that the electorate's composition in the EP elections and the primaries are more similar, with educated, metropolitan, and intellectual voters participating in both elections. In both elections, voter turnout is similarly lower than in general elections, and therefore, the parties' vote shares here are relatively comparable.

Finally, how many candidates stand in each single-member district makes a difference. Obviously, the fewer the candidates are, the better their chances of winning, and the more they are, the worse their chances. Thus, I needed to control for the number of candidates

running in a constituency (10). The number of candidates in an individual constituency was between one and five because there were eleven single-member districts where only one candidate stood. The reason why there were some districts where there was only one aspirant is that the parties had agreed in advance on whom they would run. Thus, in that sense, this part of the primaries can be considered exclusive.

5.4 Analysis

Descriptive data

A total of 253 candidates stood in the 2021 opposition primaries held to decide the common opposition candidate in all 106 single-member districts for the 2022 parliamentary elections. This means that in some single-member districts, there were several candidates, up to five, while there were districts with only one candidate running. Candidates had to indicate at the time of their candidacy which of the six parties' (DK, Jobbik, LMP, Momentum, MSZP, Párbeszéd) parliamentary group they would sit in once the parliamentary groups formed after the 2022 parliamentary elections. The fact that a candidate has chosen a parliamentary group of a particular party does not necessarily mean that that party has nominated them to run for a given single-member district. However, it certainly means that the candidate enjoyed that party's support. Therefore, for this analysis, I also consider these candidates as if the party in whose parliamentary group the candidates choose to sit in had nominated them.

Figure 13 shows that the gender ratio of candidates in the primaries was the following. Out of the 253 candidates, 57 are women, and 196 are men, so the proportion of women and men is 22.5 and 77.5 percent, respectively. Jobbik has the fewest female candidates (11%) and DK the most (31%), while Párbeszéd (17%), Momentum (23%), LMP (24%), and MSZP (26%) are in the middle of the scale in terms of the proportion of women.

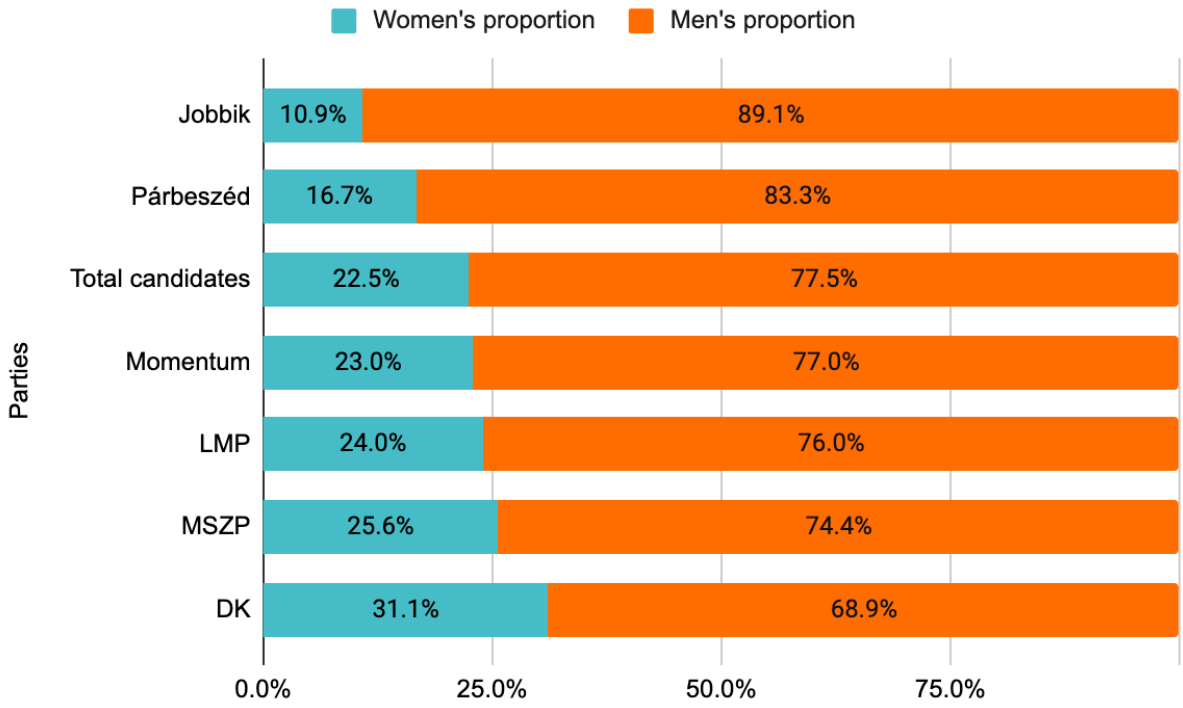

Figure 12 The proportion of female and male candidates by party affiliation in the primaries

Source: Own construction based on data from elovalasztas.hu

By comparison, in the 2018 Hungarian parliamentary elections, the proportion of female candidates among the six parties' single-member district candidates was 16 percent (see *Table 13*). Thus, the share of women in the primaries has risen by more than six percentage points this year compared to the previous election. All parties except for DK have seen an increase in the proportion of female candidates. Nevertheless, it is also true that DK had a much higher proportion of women than the other parties from the start, and proportionally they still have the highest proportion of women.

The gender ratio of the candidates in the primaries is similar to the result of the 2018 parliamentary elections: Jobbik nominated the fewest women (8%) and DK the most (33%) in the 2018 elections, while Jobbik nominated the fewest aspirants and DK nominated the most aspirants in the 2021 primaries. DK is the only party that nominated more than 30% of women on both occasions. In the 2018 parliamentary elections, there were 16% women in MSZP and Párbeszéd, 17% in LMP, and 18% in Momentum. This shows that Párbeszéd has a similar proportion of women candidates in the 2021 primaries, while MSZP, LMP, and Momentum have increased the number of women candidates in the 2021 primaries. In comparison, in Fidesz, women accounted for six percent of single-member district candidates.

Given that the ideological-political image of the parties influences their attitude toward women's representation, this is not a surprise.

Table 13 Number and proportion of female candidates in the six parties running in the 2018 parliamentary elections and the 2021 primaries

	2018 Parliamentary Elections			2021 Opposition Primaries		
	Women candidates	Total number of candidates	Women's proportion	Women candidates	Total number of candidates	Women's proportion
Jobbik	8	106	7.5%	6	55	10.9%
Párbeszéd	9	55	16.4%	2	12	16.7%
MSZP	9	55	16.4%	10	39	25.6%
LMP	17	100	17.0%	6	25	24.0%
Momentum	15	83	18.1%	14	61	23.0%
DK	14	43	32.6%	19	61	31.1%
Total candidates	63	387	16.3%	57	253	22.5%

The above table clearly shows that, proportionally, the parties nominated more women in the primaries than in the previous parliamentary elections. However, in absolute numbers, only the MSZP and the DK nominated more women in the primaries than in the previous elections. To be precise, the proportion of women has risen by 6 points compared to the previous election, which is significant. In the theoretical framework section, I assumed that more women would stand in the primaries in single-member districts compared to the previous election. The descriptive data show that more women are running in the opposition primaries, so the first hypothesis has proven correct.

The proportion of female candidates does not determine the proportion of women in parliament. A candidate's success depends, to a considerable extent, on the nature of the electoral district. Based on previous elections, it is possible to predict with a high degree of certainty what the chances of victory are for the opposition party alliance standing in each single-member district. To determine the nature or the type of the districts in terms of the winnability, I have used the analysis of 21 Research Centre (21 Kutatóközpont 2020). This analysis classifies single-member districts into three groups according to whether they are more likely to be won by the opposition parties or the governing party, or it is a swing district. The groupings are based on the parliamentary constituency breakdown of the 2019 European

Parliament election results, with minimal additions to the municipal election results.[11] As there are only 106 single-member districts, the number of candidates, especially female candidates, is exceptionally low, which explains the minor differences. *Table 14* below shows the percentage of female candidates nominated by each opposition party in the three constituency types.

Table 14 Proportion of female candidates in different districts by party in the 2021 primaries

	Total number of female candidates	Opposition district	Swing district	Government district
DK	19	**37%**	26%	**37%**
Jobbik	6	33%	**50%**	17%
LMP	6	**33%**	**33%**	**33%**
Momentum	14	**50%**	29%	21%
MSZP	10	20%	10%	**70%**
Párbeszéd	2	**50%**	0%	**50%**
Total candidates	*57*	*21%*	*15%*	*21%*

Figure 14 visually represents the exact proportions and adds the number of female candidates in each cell in absolute numbers.

[11] After the analysis was completed, the district of Baja was reclassified from pro-government to a swing district.

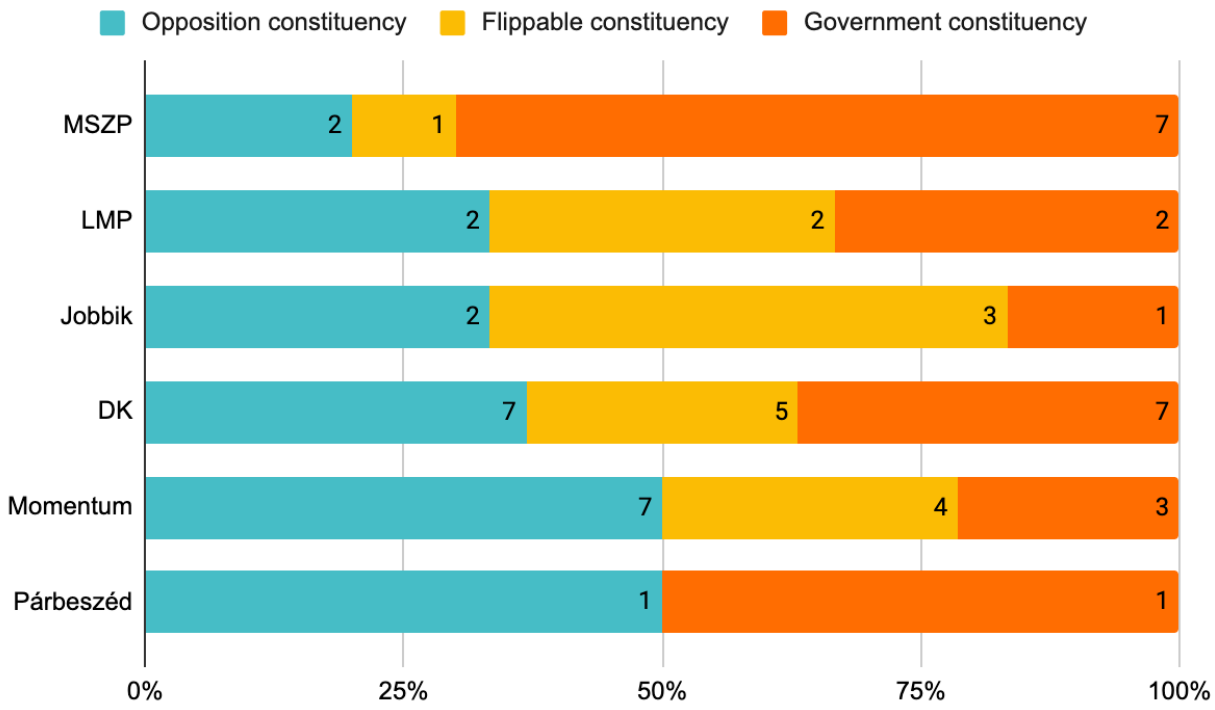

Figure 13 Distribution of female candidates in different districts by party in the 2021 primaries

Female candidates were evenly split (21-15-21) between opposition and pro-government districts. However, it is worth taking a closer look at the individual parties. DK, LMP, and Párbeszéd have the same number of female candidates in opposition and pro-government districts, while 70 percent of the female candidates of MSZP are run in pro-government districts. This is especially interesting because the party has the second highest proportion of female candidates. However, it will not increase women's representation if 70 percent of its female candidates are running in a district where they have no real chance of winning the general election. On the other hand, Momentum, in the middle regarding the number of female candidates nominated, runs half of its female candidates in winnable districts for the opposition parties and a further four candidates in swing districts. Jobbik, which had the fewest female candidates, also ran its female candidates in opposition districts rather than pro-government districts.

Thus, in relative terms, female candidates supported by Momentum and even by Jobbik have better than average chances of winning, while those supported by MSZP are running in districts where a pro-government victory is expected. This suggests that it is not enough to nominate many women. It is often an act of appearance that looks good but has no real consequences for women's descriptive representation. What matters is where they are nominated. The absolute numbers show that DK and Momentum run the same number of

women candidates in districts that the opposition is almost certain or likely to win. The other four parties run as many female candidates in single-member districts as these two parties (DK and Momentum) separately. The fact that DK and Momentum performed well in the representation of women in the primaries is partly because DK and Momentum have already fielded far more candidates in the primaries than other parties. Moreover, on the other hand, partly because DK nominated a higher proportion of women candidates and Momentum nominated women more often in winnable districts.

Women candidates' chances of winning are also influenced by prior agreements between parties and the proportion of seats allocated in constituencies where a candidate is more likely to win in the primaries. In eleven constituencies, only one candidate stood because of a prior agreement between the parties. They are all considered joint opposition candidates. In other words, there was no question of whether these candidates would win the district or not, as they were left without a competitor. The opposition parties nominated only two women (Tímea Szabó of the Párbeszéd Party in the BP 10 constituency and Erzsébet Schmuck of the LMP in the Pest 09 constituency). However, they nominated nine men in seats with no challenger in the primaries. Of the two female candidates in this situation, only Tímea Szabó was expected to win in North Buda. At the same time, Erzsébet Schmuck's victory would have been a surprise in the district of Nagykáta, where György Czerván, a Fidesz politician, has won the district since 1998.

Multivariate models

This section tests the above hypotheses using multivariate models[12]. To model the effect of the different independent variables on the total percentage of votes the candidate received, simple OLS (Ordinary Least Squares) models were estimated. The output of Table 15 reveals that being *national* and *local representatives* and *the vote share of the candidates' supporting parties* at the previous election significantly affect getting the highest votes. Candidates who were national representatives at the primaries received – ceteris paribus – 13 points more votes on average than those who were not national representatives. Similarly, candidates who were local representatives at the primaries received – ceteris paribus – 5 points more votes on average than those who were not local representatives.

[12] The data is clustered according to the different single-member districts.

These results suggest that being a local or national representative comes with a level of familiarity and visibility that is rewarded with additional votes. The output shows that in addition to the candidates' personal qualities and professional career factors, their parties' past electoral performances also influence the share of votes they receive. Everything left unchanged, 1 unit increase in the supporting parties' vote share at the previous election increases the candidates' vote share by 1.122 units on average. These results were obtained by running the model on all 253 candidates. Even though the effect of gender has a negative sign, which means that women received fewer votes than men, the variable was not significant. Thus, the second hypothesis can be accepted because I expected that the vote shares of male and female candidates would not be affected by their gender.

However, I also ran the model on a database with fewer (119) candidates. I have excluded candidates who ran alone in a single-member district, where there was no real contest, and I also excluded candidates running in districts where only candidates of the same gender ran. Thus, I only focused on candidates running in mixed-gender single-member districts in the second model. Slightly different results are obtained in this case. First, being a local representative was no longer significant, but being a national representative also lost much of its significance. The effect was not as strong as in the first model, but being a national representative still led to 5.555 percentage points more votes than not being a national leader.

What is more interesting is that gender and age became significant. The effect was not strong, but being a woman meant their vote share was 4.227 points less than men's. However, the analysis shows that the older the candidate is, the higher the vote share they receive. This is the opposite of what Papp (2017) found about the list of candidates. In her study, she argued that younger candidates are placed in better positions on the list. This suggests that parties run slightly different candidates for the list and the single-member district elections.

Moreover, it seems that in the single-member districts, older candidates and, therefore, presumably candidates with more experience are preferred to younger ones. In the third hypothesis, I assumed that in single-member districts with a mix of male and female aspirants running, voters would tend to prefer men over women. Thus, I cannot reject this hypothesis, and gender does influence the vote share of women and men, at least in the mixed-gender races.

Table 15 Results of the OLS estimation of the total vote shares of the candidates

	B (s.e)	B (s.e)

Gender	-3.058 (1.884)	-4.227 (2.437) *
Age	.0234 (.072)	.141 (.077) *
National representative	13.442 (3.103) ***	5.555 (3.295) *
Local representative	5.132 (1.757) ***	3.443 (2.105)
National leader	-2.770 (3.266)	2.536 (2.762)
Local leader	-1.934 (2.161)	-1.124 (2.513)
Recurring candidate	1.443 (2.274)	-.810 (2.614)
Vote share of the supporting parties	1.122 (.109) ***	1.165 (.137) ***
Number of candidates	-7.751 (1.327) ***	-5.501 (1.367) ***
Intercept	43.248 (6.664) ***	33.733 (8.487) ***
N	253	119
F	58.84***	51.23***
Adj.R^2	.655	.664

Entries are coefficients; robust standard errors in parentheses

***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.10

I have argued that parties may run their male and female candidates in districts with different chances of winning. For this reason, what influences who stands in which type of single-member district should be examined. In the fourth hypothesis, I assumed that parties prefer to run their male candidates in districts perceived as winnable for the party. In contrast, they prefer to run their female candidates in swing or less winnable districts. Table 16 shows the model estimating if gender or other personal and career characteristics of the candidates influence which single-member districts the parties run them. The dependent variable being a categorical variable, Multinomial Logistic Regression was used.

According to the results, incumbency is the most influential factor explaining the variance of the dependent variable: incumbents have significantly more probability of running in winnable single-member districts than newcomers. There is nothing unexpected here, as the parties could rightly expect the candidates who won the last election to win the 2022 general elections again. Therefore, it is reasonable that in single-member districts where the opposition parties are sure to win, they have put forward these candidates who have already proven they can win in the past. The results also show that candidates who were national leaders run with a greater probability in constituencies that were winnable for opposition parties than candidates who were not national leaders at the time of the primaries. This is also not surprising because earlier chapters in this dissertation showed how party leaders often make decisions about who runs and where. This is because the selectors and party leaders are often the same within a particular party. The analysis of the interviews showed that in many

cases, the party leaders usually run for the most winnable seats. The interviews also suggested that everyone was satisfied with this and that some interviewees thought the party leaders deserved these positions.

In swing single-member districts, the effect of local leaders alone is significant. This may be because the local leaders are well-known people in a particular district. They might be seen as the best candidates to flip the constituency. However, because it was clear that many of these districts were less likely to be winnable for the opposition parties, national leaders might not have fought to run in these less likely to win districts. Thus, this may give room for the local leaders to run in these districts.

Table 16 The results of the Multinomial Logistic Regression model estimating the candidates' placement in different single-member districts in the 2021 primaries

		B (s.e.)
Winnable		
	Gender	.549 (.368)
	Age	-.000 (.014)
	National representative	0.800 (.613)
	Local representative	-.266 (.412)
	National leader	1.188 (.597) **
	Local leader	-.258 (.374)
	Incumbent	16.746 (.714) ***
	Recurring candidate	-.179 (.549)
	Intercept	-1.280 (.855)
Swing		
	Gender	-.137 (.331)
	Age	-.012 (.011)
	National representative	.634 (.499)
	Local representative	.178 (.323)
	National leader	.260 (.588)
	Local leader	-.677 (.371) *
	Incumbent	-.458 (.485)
	Recurring candidate	-.081 (.396)
	Intercept	.481 (.762)
Non-winnable (base outcome)		
N		253
Wald χ^2		2307.54 ***

Entries are coefficients; robust standard errors in parentheses

***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.10

In the theoretical framework section, the fourth hypothesis was that parties prefer to run their male candidates in districts perceived as winnable for the party. In contrast, it turns out that they prefer to run their female candidates in swing or less winnable districts. However, the results in table 16 show that gender is insignificant, meaning that gender does not affect which candidates run in winnable or less-win districts. Moreover, the sign of gender

points in the opposite direction, indicating that men are run in winnable districts with a lower probability than women. In contrast, men are run in swing districts more likely than women. Thus, I must reject this hypothesis. One explanation could be that the parties may only run women if they are sure to win. Therefore, women are more likely to be nominated in the districts they are likely to win. However, when it is a swing, or a less likely to win constituency for the party, selectors have more confidence in the success of the male candidate than a woman.

5.5 Discussion

Looking at the gender ratio of candidates in the primaries, the opposition parties, on average, nominated a higher proportion of women in single-member districts than in the previous elections. There are differences in the way parties nominate female and male candidates. DK and Momentum show a more outstanding commitment to women's representation than other parties. They are the ones who run a higher proportion of women than other parties, and they do so in constituencies where these women candidates theoretically have a better chance of winning the constituency than the ruling party's candidates. By contrast, the MSZP, which has a 20% gender quota and is Hungary's oldest left-wing party, has fielded most of its female candidates in districts with little real chance of winning. Overall, however, the left-wing parties nominated more women in the primaries despite having far fewer opposition candidates in the primaries than in the 2018 parliamentary elections. This suggests that the proportion of female candidates increased in more difficult circumstances.

The multivariate models present mixed results regarding the sub-hypotheses of the chapter. In most cases, the effect of the variables is pointed in the expected direction. Some variables affected the dependent variable to a greater degree than others. Some variables had significant effects in all the models remaining within the realm of statistical significance. First, being a national representative at the primaries was proven to be a strong predictor. Candidates who were national representatives at the same time when the primaries occurred were more likely to receive a higher vote share at the primaries. Second, the role of the local political background was significant in most cases. Local representatives received higher vote shares than candidates who were not directly involved in local politics. The first model found that the gender of the candidate was not significant. However, when I examined only mixed-gender single-member district races, the national representativeness variable lost its significance, but age and gender became significant in return. Although both effects were

minimal, the second model suggests that older candidates receive more votes than younger candidates and women receive fewer votes than men.

Second, I assumed that women are more likely to be run in swing or unwinnable districts while men are more likely to be nominated in the winnable single-member districts. The results show that gender was not significant. At the same time, an aspirant is more likely to be placed in a winnable single-member district if they are a national party leader or an incumbent MP. This is no surprise because, on the one hand, incumbency is considered to have both political and electoral advantages over challengers at elections. On the other hand, national party leaders have a more significant say in which constituencies they want to run in and understandably will choose the constituencies with the best chance of winning.

Previous research in Hungary suggested that women's chances are much worse in single-member districts and that women have higher chances to enter the parliament from the party lists. However, this analysis of the primaries shows that primaries are a form of candidate selection that may favor women. While the opposition primaries did not bring immediate breakthrough changes, they can be seen as a small step toward improving women's political representation. While parties already made preliminary decisions regarding the candidates before primaries, perhaps even more informal, the primaries are still a more decentralized, inclusive, and institutionalized form of a nomination than the general elections.

Therefore, this chapter also confirms that the decentralized, inclusive and institutionalized candidate selection procedure positively impacts women's political representation. Moreover, this chapter again proves that the type of selection method chosen by a political party has an impact on the selection of women for parliamentary elections. Thus, it seems worth experimenting with new methods of nominating candidates if there is a will to improve women's political representation. The institution of primaries seems to be worth keeping in Hungary because it does not harm women at all, but it seems more beneficial than general elections.

6 Chapter: Sacrificial Lambs – Women and 'Hopeless' seats

6.1 Introduction

Becoming a political candidate does not mean that one is granted a seat in parliament (Katz 2001). Candidates placed higher on party lists or nominated in winnable or safe party districts are more likely to be elected (Carey 2007; Papp 2017). Previous research has found that women and ethnic minority groups are often nominated in hopeless seats where there is little chance of winning, while male candidates are more often selected to run in a safe or winnable district (Canon 1993; Carroll 1994; Erickson 1991, 1993; Gertzog and Simard 1981; Kulich, Ryan, and Haslam 2014; Murray, Krook, and Opello 2012; Ryan, Haslam, and Kulich 2010; Thomas and Bodet 2013; Vandeleene 2014). Stambough and O'Regan (2007) argue that parties use women as *sacrificial lambs* when they face difficulty finding a candidate for a competition they are not likely to win.

Existing literature puts the blame mostly on political parties that tend to behave as "difficult gatekeepers" when nominating women (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Norris and Lovenduski 1993, 1995; Rule 1981). This is also why the previous chapters have focused on the demand side, i.e., political parties. In this chapter, however, I instead investigate the supply side and try to understand what explains the acceptance of hopeless seat nominations by political actors. I am interested in the strategies of both women and men. Previous studies suggest that individuals who seek elected office are strategists, and they only seek nominations when their own or their party's prospects look good (Abramowitz and Segal 1992; Canon 1993; Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Squire 1992). Otherwise, they would risk being viewed as losers and hurting their future chances for office by running in a hopeless situation (Stambough and O'Regan 2007). Therefore, it seems irrational for any political actor to accept nominations that do not give them a realistic chance of winning. Despite the growing literature on political ambition, the motivations of political actors to accept such nominations remain unexplored.

This chapter focuses on Hungary, which seems to be an extreme case of the sacrificial lamb phenomenon. This is because while the proportion of female candidates is steadily rising, the proportion of women representatives does not change. Since the country's first democratic election in 1990, the number of female legislators has stagnated at around 10 percent in the last three decades. While the share of women among candidates has increased from 8.5 percent in 1990 to 34.0 percent in 2018, the proportion of women in parliament does not follow this trend. On the other hand, the previous studies found that this is because

parties tend to nominate fewer women in the single-member districts (SMDs) and often nominate them in districts where the chance of winning is low (Tóth and Ilonszki 2015a). Contrary to the expectations of the literature, women's position on the list tier is not significantly better because mainly men are placed at the top of the party lists (Ilonszki 2012; Ilonszki and Montgomery 2002; Papp 2017; Várnagy and Ilonszki 2012). The interviews also confirmed that women are indeed often used as sacrificial lambs. At the same time, the previous chapter showed that women were not necessarily sacrificial lambs during primaries, except perhaps for the co-chair of LMP, whose case is difficult not to think of as a sacrificial lamb.[13]

Based on this, one reason why the proportion of women in parliament is chronically low in Hungary is that parties use women as sacrificial lambs. For this reason, the question that motivates this chapter is: what do the people involved in the candidate selection procedure think is why women often seem to accept these positions? This chapter draws on in-depth interviews with candidates and selectors from the main parties in the 2018 elections and the 2021 primaries in Hungary to answer this question.

Women's underrepresentation is critical because of its consequences for political representation and democratic legitimacy (Lawless 2015). Studies suggest that women's numeric representation in politics influences substantive and symbolic representation (Celis 2006; Jones 2014; Wängnerud 2009). Thus, it is important to understand why women accept nominations in hopeless seats and thereby not necessarily consciously contribute to their underrepresentation in politics. The primary contribution of this analysis is to reveal the narrative of both female and male candidates and female and male selectors. It also contributes to the literature on the emergence of candidates and political ambitions.

The structure of the chapter is as follows. First, I give a brief insight into the literature on women and hopeless seats. In the second section, I introduce the empirical analysis of the interviews. Finally, I summarize and conclude the results in the last section.

[13]This is Erzsébet Schmuck, whom I mentioned earlier that she was nominated in a single-member district, where she had no chance of winning because Fidesz has always won that district since 1997. However, Schmuch was not compensated, meaning the party did not place her in the top position on the list, and she was eliminated from parliament.

6.2 Women and Hopeless Seats

The definition of hopeless seats is context-dependent. However, most studies consider the nominations hopeless when the candidates are placed either at the bottom of party lists or in districts where the party has little chance to win based on previous election results. Early research on hopeless seats focused on the differences between political amateurs versus experienced candidates (Canon 1993; Leuthold 1968). According to Canon (1993), parties run amateurs – candidates without prior experience in elected office – in hopeless seats. Therefore, political amateurs often become sacrificial lambs. However, other studies suggest that this phenomenon is gendered, and not only amateurs but women are more likely to become sacrificial lambs.

Stambough and O'Regan (2007) argue that women are used as sacrificial lambs in non-competitive races where the party needs someone to run against an unbeatable incumbent. In Hungary, this practically happened in the last national election in 2022, where LMP's female co-chair Erzsébet Schmuck ran in a single-member constituency where György Czerván, a Fidesz politician, had won since 1998. Even though everyone knew that Schmuck had little or no chance of winning, she was not nominated for a winnable place on the party list. As a consequence, the co-chair of the Green Party did not get into parliament. The failure of a party leader or co-chairman to enter parliament is almost unprecedented in the history of Hungarian politics.

According to Thomas and Bodet (2013), women are more likely than men to serve as sacrificial lambs or party standard bearers in districts where their party has little chance to win, and therefore no one wants to run. Ryan, Haslam and Kulich (2010) find that women within the Conservative Party gained significantly fewer votes than their male counterparts in the 2005 U.K. general elections. However, it turned out that this difference in performance was because women were selected to contest seats in which the candidate from the opposite party had a higher chance of winning. In other words, it was not that women were not good enough candidates or that voters were less likely to vote for women, but that women were nominated in less winnable seats in the first place. Niven (2006) argues that women in the U.S. are discouraged from running in districts where their party is strong, while men are discouraged from running in districts where their party is weak. Lawless and Pearson (2008) point out that women in both parties in the U.S. face more primary competition than men. Thus women need to be "better" than their male counterparts to win the primary election. Using an experimental design, Ryan, Haslam and Kulich (2010) find that a male candidate is more

likely to be selected to contest a safe seat. However, there is a strong preference for female candidates when the seat is described as hard to win, even when past experiences and qualifications are controlled.

Although the literature argues that the proportional system is more favorable for women than majoritarian systems (Norris 1985; Rule 1981, 1987), the empirical evidence suggests that female candidates are at a disadvantage in the nomination procedure compared to male candidates in both systems. Kunovich (2003) finds that women are less likely than men to secure a key position on Poland and the Czech Republic electoral lists. Since the composition of the electoral lists is completely determined by political parties, the list placement indicates which candidate is favored by the political party. Female incumbents tend to have higher candidate qualities than male incumbents (Milyo and Schosberg 2000). However, there is evidence that female incumbents enjoy significantly less electoral security than male incumbents because women run for tougher seats against popular incumbents (Cooperman and Oppenheimer 2001; Palmer and Simon 2006).

Many studies investigate how potential candidates evaluate and weigh the costs, benefits, and risks of taking an elective office (Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde 1987; Black 1972; Brace 1984; Rohde 1979; Schlesinger 1966). They find that potential candidates run only if the expected benefit outweighs its costs (Abramowitz and Segal 1992; Jacobson and Kernell 1983; Squire 1992). Individuals only seek nominations when their party's prospects look good. They would not risk being viewed as a loser and hurting future chances for office by running in a hopeless situation (Stambough and O'Regan 2007). According to Maisel and Stone (1997), the perception of electoral success strongly influences the potential candidates' decisions to seek nominations.

Moreover, studies suggest that gender is significant in decision-making calculus for elective office (e.g. Bledsoe and Herring 1990; Fox and Lawless 2004, 2005). Fulton et al. (2006) argue that when the expected benefit of office portends a favorable outcome, female candidates are significantly more likely than their male counterparts to run for Congress in the U.S. They assume that women are more strategic in their decisions about becoming a candidate. They are more responsive to the expected benefit than men. Other researchers also highlight the strategic considerations of women. For example, Anzia and Berry (2011) find that Congresswomen in the U.S. wait longer before they run to ensure they have superior merits.

Beyond the literature on strategist politicians, further research on political ambition suggests that individuals run in elections for several reasons. Some scholars argue that people run in elections to bring attention to policy issues (Craig and O'Brien 1993; Fox, Lawless, and Feeley 2001; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Other research shows that ideological motivations (Thomas 1994), politicized upbringing (Beck and Jennings 1991; Flanigan and Zingale 2002), the intention of serving the party (Fowler 1977), and the joy of campaigning (Kazee 1980) also motivate potential candidates to seek nominations.

This chapter examines what makes women accept nominations in hopeless seats. It seems completely irrational to run in an election in which they have little chance of winning. According to the literature on strategic politicians, no one should accept nominations if the prospects do not look good unless they gain something in return. Thus, there are two questions I attempt to answer in this chapter: why do women sacrifice themselves, and what do they hope to receive in return? While there are many studies on women's underrepresentation in Hungary, this is the first qualitative investigation to unveil women's motivation on why they are in politics and accepts these precarious positions.

6.3 Interview Findings

Both female and male respondents argued that women are more likely than men to be nominated in hopeless seats. When I asked why there are few women in the parliament, one female party leader, Nóra, responded:

> "Women are placed at the bottom of the party list, which are definitely not winnable positions."

Interestingly, only selectors and party leaders argued that women's low position on the party lists and their nomination in non-winnable SMDs are the reasons for male overrepresentation in the Hungarian legislature. As two other party leaders noted:

> "Women are nominated in single-member districts, which are non-winnable, and women's proportion increases in the second half of the party list. Sometimes the proportion of women goes above 50 percent at the bottom of the list. However, they are not winnable places." (Hanna, MSZP)

> "I think many women make it to the candidacy, but most of them do not become representatives. Men are pushing them out and nominating themselves in the winnable positions. We [men] nominate ourselves in the winnable districts and place women in

non-winnable positions. Therefore they have a proportionally lower chance of getting into parliament." (Péter, P)

This quote shows that a male selector openly discusses the selection bias in favor of men. Péter acknowledges that selectors – primarily men – tend to place male candidates in winnable positions. The statements also illustrate that women in party leadership know these positions' (un)winnability. Of course, it does not necessarily mean those female candidates who are lower down in the party hierarchy are also aware of it. Thus, why do women accept these positions? In the following, based on the results of the interviews, I analyze the motivations of female and male candidates to run for these seats.

6.3.1 A "Golden" Opportunity

Most respondents argue that women's motivation to accept a candidacy in a hopeless seat is partly due to their limited opportunities. According to a female MP (Mónika, former party leader), 'in Hungary, the whole politics is terribly male-dominated. It seems that women are often discouraged from participating in politics due to traditional values and social pressure. On the one hand, these values influence women's decision to accept and be satisfied with such positions. The reason for this could be that Hungary is a very traditional society; girls are taught from an early age that they must obey and that women have a much greater compulsion to conform than men.

On the other hand, respondents noted that women are given fewer chances than men to make it to politics even when they want to. Thus, some female candidates believe they must take every chance they give them. In many cases, regardless of the winning prospects, the nomination itself may well be considered a step forward for women. Therefore, even seemingly bad nominations often appear as "golden" opportunities for women who want to enter politics. As explained by Péter, a male member of the leadership:

"In many situations, let us be honest, it is progress if female candidates make it somewhere. It can be considered positive if they are nominated, even though it is not a winnable position. Therefore, women accept hopeless seats. Hungary is a macho society. Thus, women either accept these [bad] positions or cannot run otherwise. It is the same question as to why women accept that men earn way more money than women in multinational companies in the same position. The answer is that they cannot do anything. They must be satisfied with what they get, and women do the same in politics too. This system helps and favors men, and it is more difficult for women to achieve certain things." (Péter, P)

Peter's story reveals much about Hungarian culture and the state of gender equality in Hungary. He points out that inequality in politics starts in childhood because socialization and upbringing are gendered, i.e., boys and girls are brought up differently and are expected to perform differently. It also suggests that education could be essential in tackling gender inequality in politics.

One would think that women – similarly to any newcomers – only face difficulties at the beginning of their careers when they want to enter politics for the first time. However, the barriers disappear once in politics, especially in leadership positions. Previous research also suggests that younger women will not face the same barriers as older women because the traditional views of gender roles would eventually change (Bernstein 1986; Burrell 1996). However, younger and older candidates, both aspirants and female leaders, report that being a woman in politics has certain limitations, which do not disappear with time, experience, or positions within the party. Hanna, a candidate who reached a high leadership position at her party, talks about these limitations:

> "Women find it harder to access important contacts and information in politics. I think that is why women give up and leave politics. It takes many years for that to change. We [women] know how far we can go when we enter politics. We are not reaching the finishing point, but we know that a candidacy is a good thing. I usually say that I got to a place where few people made it from the same social environment. That is why I am satisfied. If I were a man, I would see it differently. However, I do not want to get stuck. I do not want to be the burnt-out politician we see dozens of in parliament. I do not want to, and I cannot work without doing it with a pure heart, soul, and faith. I do not want to sit inside and get paid. Nevertheless, I think I will leave politics earlier than most men." (Hanna, MSZP)

Hanna's quote suggests that men's and women's opportunities and life situations are entirely different. While as a woman, one must be happy about becoming a national politician and can only get to a certain point, for men, the sky seems to be the limit. This can also explain the previously mentioned glass cliff phenomenon that parties tend to include more women among their candidates when they face a crisis, e.g., an electoral crisis. However, these are usually nominations in districts where the party has no chance of winning. Nevertheless, they must nominate a candidate to be able to have a national list. According to the electoral regulations, 'a party list may be set up by a party which has put forward an independent candidate in at least 71 (seventy-one) single-member districts in at least 14

counties and the capital'.[14] In addition, having more women on the list may indicate that these parties are inclusive and progressive on gender equality. This may explain why some women are nominated at the bottom of the national list. Thus, it may be a vote-maximizing strategy because of the voters.

Nonetheless, these positions are primarily non-winnable. Therefore, they could also be precarious for women's political careers, as women might be seen as losers and less suitable for politics. However, many of these respondents indicate that women accept these nominations because it is still a good opportunity. At the same time, men say no, as they do not want their political careers to suffer. As one female MP, Zsófia stated:

> "These are completely losing positions, and they [men] do not want to give their names to a losing position. This is a very frustrating situation. Men run a normal political career where they have a certain path and eventually become party leaders. Women often gain power very randomly. Often because the situation is so bad that a man does not want it, this is common in the world. Because the candidacy is still worth it; otherwise, they would never get there. Moreover, there is an opportunity, and the big question is whether they [women] can use this opportunity or not. Women's political careers are much more layered, complicated, and riskier [than men]. It is not written anywhere that women will get much further in politics." (Zsófia, Együtt)

Zsófia argued that it is a typical female pattern that women make it to leadership positions during a crisis. According to her, this happens not only in Hungary but everywhere worldwide. According to her, this was the case with Bernadett Széll, the leader of the green party, LMP. Széll became the party leader because the men around her in the party had just disappeared. She added:

> "There are women who can cling to these positions. So, they can gain political talent in this demanding situation. This could be the case with Bernadett Széll now. The question is, who can consolidate the situation in Hungary among the opposition parties? She has the opportunity now. Not sure if she can do it or if it is possible to do it at all. It is mission impossible. However, there is an existing opportunity one can try." (Zsófia, Együtt)

Since then, Bernadett Szél has not only ceased to be a party leader but has also failed to enter parliament as a representative in the last national elections. In contrast to other male leaders, such as András Fekete-Győr, former president of Momentum, who, despite no longer being a party leader, has entered parliament as an MP. Other respondents also

[14] See: https://net.jogtar.hu/jogszabaly?docid=a1300036.tv

reported that women have a higher chance of becoming candidates in times of crisis. The stereotypical belief that women are better at handling a crisis may also lead to women being preferred by selectors in a crisis. On the other hand, this is also why women accept these positions, as they believe they can handle the crisis better than men. It is a form of internalized sexism, i.e., sexist behaviors and attitudes that men and women have towards themselves and other people of the same sex. Both female and male respondents argued that women are better than men at handling a crisis:

> "Men have difficulty facing their failures and getting up off the floor. Women can go through crises faster than men. They [women] say, 'let us stand up and move on.' We [women] are stronger in crises and when one needs to be brave." (Hanna, MSZP)

> "One thing I know is that women have a higher threshold for stress tolerance than men. I know this for sure. The following day after we had a poor result in the election, the party's leadership met to discuss the party's future. Everyone was completely overwhelmed except for one female leader. She took control of the situation and explained what we should start doing about it." (László, Együtt)

6.3.2 A National Candidacy as a Tool for Positions in Local Politics

The overwhelming majority of respondents believed that women deliberately accept nominations for hopeless seats expecting those who can benefit them in the future. Many female respondents stated that these hopeless seats are opportunities for accessing other positions at the local level. Thus, some women are aware of the un-winnability of the seats, but it does not matter because they do not want to be politicians at the national level. However, they consider the candidacy for the national election as a tool to become a local candidate at the local elections. This is because they hope the party will appreciate their sacrifice when the local elections come.

On the other hand, they believe that they can gain popularity, recognition, and experience by campaigning. This all suggests that some women may be indeed good strategists who are responsive to the benefit of the national candidacy, even if it does not bring them a mandate. This is in line with the literature that suggests that politicians, including women politicians, are strategists regarding the nomination. The following statements by two female candidates illustrate this point:

> "If a candidacy for national office is not working, it still could be an entry to other functions, e.g., local representativeness. It is widespread in every party that if someone runs a good campaign and has not achieved an outrageous result at the parliamentary

elections, then we [the party] can try them for the next local elections." (Mónika, former leader of a party, MSZP)

"Women accept nominations [for national elections] knowing that they cannot be elected representatives [member of parliaments]. They take risks for the community. We might not get to the end, but candidacy is a good chance to prepare someone for local elections. A national campaign can be beneficial for a local politician." (Hanna, MSZP)

This is confirmed by the fact that many respondents noted that women often prefer local politics to national politics. They argued that national politics is too "dirty", and the tone of the politics favors men rather than women. According to a male selector, Dániel:

"Well, the tone of the politics, particularly in the recent past, the political culture, and the work involved in politics scare off women. They deter men too, but men are more tolerant than women. Women are relatively sensitive. They find it difficult to tolerate these." (Dániel, Jobbik)

Other respondents also argued that local politics is more suitable for women. These views are often based on traditional gender stereotypical views of women. There were no differences between candidates' opinions and selectors or national and local politicians. Consider one female local politician, Bella, who runs as a candidate in a single-member district, a national level party leader, Hanna, and a female selector, Nóra:

"Personally, the municipal politics is closer to me. I do not want to be a parliamentary representative, but it is a tool for me to defend municipal politics if Fidesz does not win." (Bella, P)

"It's a more grateful, easier job to do local politics, that is why there are more women among the mayors, and they are successful too." (Hanna, MSZP)

"It is also true that women stop at the municipal level, let us say at the mayor level. That is a hen's role, and there is also a stereotype about a mayor being a caring mother. This managerial character manages her family but also the town and village. She is sufficiently emphatic and interested in all people's social problems." (Nóra, MSZP)

These quotes shed light on women's stereotypes about their capabilities and the nature of their character compared to men. Only Nora sheds light on the fact that it is gender stereotyping that is at the root of the perception that women are better suited to local politics than national politics.

6.3.3 A Sense of Loyalty to the Party / a Sense of Duty to Help the Country

When asked about their motivations for joining a political party and deciding to run as a candidate, women were more likely than men to report that they did not have much political ambition before. However, most men said they have always been interested in politics. They explained that they had read political news and followed politics early. It was, therefore, relatively straightforward why they wanted to become politicians. In contrast, women rarely mentioned that they had followed politics since childhood and had some public interest, but they would never have thought they would be politicians. In addition, more male respondents reported that they were founders of their political parties, while only one woman mentioned that she was among the founders.

In contrast, female respondents often reported a sense of duty as motivation to become candidates, especially in times of crisis. Many of the women said they accepted a candidacy or another position within their party when the organization faced difficulties and felt a sense of duty to help them. For example, in the previous section, Isabella said she had run for national office to help prevent Fidesz from destroying local government politics. There is a sense of self-sacrifice evident here too. This confirms what the literature suggests that different motivations drive politicians to take on political roles. The previous literature suggests that people run for election to raise awareness of political issues (Craig and O'Brien 1993; Fox, Lawless, and Feeley 2001; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995) or ideological motivations (Thomas 1994), politicized upbringing (Beck and Jennings 1991; Flanigan and Zingale 2002), the desire to serve the party (Fowler 1977) and the pleasure of campaigning (Kazee 1980) may motivate potential candidates to stand for elections. However, while political upbringing is more likely to influence men's motivation, women are more likely to be driven by ideological motivations. Consider the following two responses:

> "When the party was formed, I still did not think I wanted to be a politician. I planned to help the organization from the background, writing policy papers, among other things. However, after the election in 2014, many frontline politicians – among them the male leader of the party – decided to leave the party, and we – who were in the background before – decided that we could not let the party die. We believed that there was value in what we had created, so we decided to take over the party and start doing politics. This is when I also became a candidate." (Jolán, Együtt)

> "When I joined the party, it was already ruined. However, I thought if I left the party and went away too, like everyone else, it would not be easy for those who work with

their heart and soul to save the party and believe that something could grow in its ruins. Moreover, I was pleased and grateful to do this." (Barbara, Liberálisok)

Barbara explained that she left her work abroad to return to Hungary to run as a candidate for a political party. She argued that important values would have been lost in the country if the party had disappeared. In her opinion, keeping the party alive would have contributed to a new kind of democracy that was needed for the country. Thus, she wanted to keep the party alive. Initially, she even voluntarily worked for the party without receiving any payment. In her words:

> "I believed this should have been the honest and fair behavior in a damaged country like this [Hungary]. One had to try to do something, and I thought we [the party] could succeed." (Barbara, Liberálisok)

Since most of the respondents are from opposition parties, this may explain why helping the party and the country is an essential motivational factor in becoming a candidate. However, this does not explain the gender differences and why men did not report such motivations behind their candidacy. Consider the following notes:

> "I became a candidate very soon after joining the party... There were a few people who would show their face in this system [Hungary]. Therefore, my candidacy was a necessity in the beginning." (Andrea, LMP)

> Now I believe that as a candidate, I have a responsibility towards my party to give everything I can in the campaign to strengthen the party and opposition." (Bella, P)

Andrea's statement illustrates well what many interviewees pointed out: not many people want to become a candidate in the current public life in Hungary. It is tough to find any outstanding candidates for the parties. Because of this, almost "anyone" who risks their personal life to become a candidate is highly sought after. However, in the current situation, it is understandably much easier to become a candidate than ever, as there is not much competition.

Some respondents argued that the feeling of helping the party comes from loyalty to the party. According to a female candidate, Réka, when she joined her party, she accepted that she would follow the party's directions and would not care about her struggle. In her words:

> "Let us say that I am a correct person. When I talked to the president of the candidate selection committee, I said okay, I accept the nomination because I do not want to let you down, and this [candidacy], being on the party list does not mean so much negativity for me than for the party me not being on the list. So, I said it was fine by me.

> I am very loyal to the party leadership, which is why it is easy to be loyal to the party." (Réka, Momentum)

Réka refers to what has already been mentioned earlier: a party needs a certain number of candidates in individual electoral districts to have a national list. Therefore, she has agreed to stand in a single-member district to help the party draw up its list. A male candidate, Ádám, mentioned that one female candidate in his party, despite having no ambition to be in politics, also accepted a nomination for the sake of the party. According to him:

> "She is not a classic political figure pushing herself forward and wanted this candidacy. She certainly would not have aspired to political office on her own. It was rather the responsibility that the party asked of her that made her accept the candidacy." (Ádám, Momentum)

Some respondents suggested that a sense of duty regarding their country also boosts women's motivations to become candidates. In addition to their parties, female respondents often reported being worried about the future of their country and showed great willingness to sacrifice themselves to save the country. Many female respondents had joined a political party when – in their perception – the country was not doing well, and they wanted to help somehow. Consider these two examples:

> "I joined my political party because I did not see how else I could stay in Hungary, and I want to stay in Hungary. I am not saying in one year or five years, but I see that these people [in her party] can eventually bring about change. I see potential in this party, which makes me want to do it because I see that it makes sense. I am not happy that I have to do this as a girl in her twenties because there are people in parliament who are getting paid millions for this. However, I want to say that I have done everything I can to make this country a better place". (Réka, Momentum)

Réka's last sentence points out that the main reason she ran for office is that she is keen to improve her country. Another young candidate argued similarly that she joined a political party specifically because she felt she could help the country this way. In her words:

> "I had to do something in 2014 because the country [Hungary] was not doing well. I was upset about the state of the country. So I decided to join a political party. I wrote to this party and said, 'I am here, and I want to help.'" (Andrea, LMP)

Soon after she contacted the party, the party asked her to stand as a candidate. When I asked Andrea if she immediately accepted a candidacy at the party, she said:

> "Of course, if this is a way of helping the party and the country, then let it be. However, I did not have a clear or minimal plan for becoming a candidate or a leader. The party just found me and asked me to be a candidate, and I accepted it." (Andrea, LMP)

Another female candidate, who ran in the primary election, made a similar argument and stressed that she was not running for herself. However, first and foremost, she runs for her community (her place of residence) and the country. Indeed, she claimed that she would not stand for election next time if it were only for her benefit. In her words:

> "I am doing it for my local community. I believed that I could turn the country's fortunes around, that there could be a renewal within the parliament. However, if I have to stamp my feet for my own sake, I am not sure I will be here for the next election." (Vera, DK)

Last but not least, some female respondents argued that women accept candidacy in hopeless seats because they want to help, although they did not want to be politicians in the first place. This suggests that some women might accept these positions out of altruism. However, this can be seen as internalized sexism, i.e., women themselves believe stereotypes about women. However, it is also true that gender socialization pushes women and men in very different directions and shifts the caring responsibilities to women. This may explain why women seem more inclined to help others than men. However, some studies argue that women tend to be more altruistic than men due to gender socialization (Andreoni and Vesterlund 2001; Simmons and Emanuele 2007). One female leader, Zita, highlighted that this feeling of help is gendered. In the view of Zita:

> "Many women candidates take up the nomination because they want to help. The female instinct to want to help comes out, but then some say, 'I do not want to be a representative because I would rather stay in my own life.' I get grumpy when this happens because such good-minded people belong in politics." (Zita, Jobbik)

Many female respondents argued that they are in politics for the benefit of others and the community while suggesting that other (probably male) politicians have different motivations for participating in politics. This suggests an explanation as to why women care about their country and their party, which in turn leads them to accept these hopeless positions. Consider the following examples:

> "Many do politics for money, for business cards, but the reason I do politics is what I could achieve." (Barbara, Liberálisok)

> "It is not only about winning. I became a politician because I wanted to achieve social changes. This is my political mission. A political mandate can help to reach this aim. On the other hand, I want to reach voters and influence their thoughts. A campaign is a useful tool to reach voters. You can meet voters and talk to them." (Bella, P)

> "This [candidacy] is not a livelihood, a matter of life. It is a matter of principle for me. I am doing this beside my normal life. I have a family and a job, and this is an internal mission that I can contribute to the community. I will not do it at any price, only faithfully, then we get where we get. Nevertheless, the majority [of the people] do not think this way. For most of them, it is about livelihood." (Zita, Jobbik)

These quotes are essentially about the motivations of individual politicians. However, it seems clear that this may well be generalizable to women and that there is a gendered difference in this, i.e., men and women are motivated differently in their political participation. It is also in line with what was mentioned earlier in the dissertation by a male politician (Peter) who said "women do value-based politics". However, a female politician also speaks about women in general and underlined that women are clearly in politics for others, primarily for the community. In her words:

> "Women often do politics, not for themselves but others. We do it for the community." (Hanna, MSZP)

These gender differences in political motivation can also explain why women are more likely than men to accept running in hopeless seats. While men seem to care more about the financial and career benefits of the positions, women tend to view them as opportunities to do something for others. This could be because men are more likely to be politically socialized and therefore see politics as a career, while women are more ideologically driven. Two female respondents explicitly said there is a difference between female and male politicians. Two female respondents specifically drew attention to the difference between male and female politicians:

> "Perhaps I am prejudiced against male colleagues, but wherever they decide about money, and therefore there are better income opportunities, for example in the parliament, especially in the Budget or the Constitution Committee, where there is a double honorarium, there are only men." (Mónika, MSZP)

> "Most mayors in small local governments that face serious problems are women because they happily accept such a job. There is no money, no fee for being a mayor, but there is much work to do, and one must pull the town out of the shit. Women take on this job because they say: it is about the future of families. As we move up and the

> settlement's prestige, income, and size increase, men are becoming increasingly prominent. There are a small number of women among the mayors in Budapest because it comes with prestige. It is remarkable to the medical hierarchy. For example, how many female surgeons do we see? When it is about money, prestige, and competition, men come to the fore against women." (Bella, P)

Only one young male candidate, Ádám, described a similar motivation for doing politics:

> "I come from a poor family, but I went to a good school, and I was able to guarantee myself a comfortable lifestyle. And then I had such an experience that I would like to return something to society." (Ádám, Momentum)

6.4 Discussion

In this chapter, I focused on the supply of female candidates and tried to understand what makes women accept nominations in hopeless seats. Although the literature on sacrificial lambs treats women as victims, the findings indicate that some women run for hopeless seats out of strategic motivations. Female respondents reported that they considered these candidacies' benefits before accepting them. This suggests that some women are strategic actors. The interviews suggest that female candidates are aware of the (non)winnability of these seats, but they believe they can turn these "bad" positions to their advantage. Thus, some women decide on their nominations based on the long-term benefits. It is in line with what Anzia and Barry (2011) found that women wait strategically longer before running to ensure they have superior merits.

Most female respondents argued that these hopeless seats as good opportunities. However, there were two main differences in their motivations. First, since it is more difficult for women in politics to be recruited, some women will accept any opportunity. As one male respondent argued, women accept these positions because they do not have other options: *"What else could they do? They cannot make a women's revolution."* Some women think they might not get this opportunity again; therefore, they view these hopeless seats as unique opportunities with benefits in the future. Therefore, they want to maximize their chances of winning, similarly to political amateurs who run against incumbents (Canon 1993). Second, some female candidates who run in national elections prefer local politics over national politics. Moreover, they hope that running as a candidate in a non-winnable seat and thus making a "sacrifice" for the party will benefit them later to gain other positions at the

local level. They also think that campaigning can help them gain popularity, visibility, and experience, which will benefit them when running in local elections in the future.

The interviews also revealed differences between women and men in their initial motivations to join politics, which explains why women are more likely to accept hopeless seats. A prevailing view among the interviewed male politicians was that they became candidates because they were always interested in politics. In contrast, female politicians more often reported a sense of loyalty to the party and a sense of duty towards the country, which motivated them to join a political party and eventually become a candidate. Finally, a few women also reported accepting these nominations because it is an honor to be on the national party list. In the word of a female candidate *"It is an honorable thing to get into the 106 candidates of the party."* (Hanna, MSZP)

Taken together, the nomination of women in hopeless seats continues to contribute to male dominance in politics. It is especially problematic in Hungary, where the underrepresentation of women has become chronic. This can perpetuate the standard stereotypical views in Eastern Europe that women are less suitable for politics and leadership positions and can also discourage potential female candidates from entering the political arena. Nevertheless, the respondents seemed optimistic about the expected benefits of these nominations. Therefore, future studies should be conducted to determine the long-term effect of accepting nominations in hopeless seats on a candidate's career trajectories. As some respondents perceived, it would be essential to study whether hopeless seats are "golden" opportunities for women. Does it lead to salvation in the end, or is it just a way of deselecting women from national politics? It would be interesting to examine the political dynamics of this. Can this accelerate gender equality, that is, make the political proportion of women more concentrated if a party gets on the parking lot for a long time? One might rightly think that in such a case, women are more likely to seek such political parties, but the question is whether the proportion of women in the party suddenly jumps once this party is returned to politics.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Main Findings of the Dissertation

In this dissertation, I examined the impact of parties' candidate selection and nomination on women's political representation. I wanted to understand better how the different forms of candidate selection procedures represent different opportunities for women first to become candidates and then representatives. Previous literature has highlighted the role of political parties as gatekeepers to low levels of women's political representation. For this reason, I wanted to identify which forms of candidate selection procedures could lead to a lower or higher representation of women. The dissertation aimed to find answers that can provide concrete policy recommendations, which could be used by parties committed to higher political representation of women. In many cases, the will may be there to get women more involved in politics, but the interviews suggest that the tools and knowledge are not available for all parties.

As the dissertation is heavily based on the Hungarian case, in the Hungarian puzzle chapter, I first presented the literature about the reasons for the low political representation of women in Hungary. After examining the possible factors influencing women's representation, it can be concluded that changes in the Hungarian electoral system make the role of the parties as gatekeepers even more important. Thus, further analysis of women's representation should focus more on parties. In addition, I have presented the results of the interviews conducted with aspirants, candidates, MPs, and selectors of political parties since I assumed that the political actors might provide different views. This section aimed to show the perception and motivation of both female and male politicians regarding women's representation in Hungary. The results of the interviews offered three structural explanations for women's underrepresentation in politics:

1. The role of political parties and their biases against female candidates.
2. The tone of politics and traditional gender roles can discourage women from engaging in politics.
3. The Hungarian parliament is a gendered workplace that makes it difficult for women with children to balance work and private life.

In addition to the Hungarian puzzle chapter, the dissertation had four main empirical chapters. In the third chapter, I examined and compared the impact of the candidate selection procedure of 122 parties on women's political representation in 19 countries. This

analysis gave insight into which candidate selection methods result in more women being selected to run as candidates and then elected as representatives. I analyzed the parties' candidate selection procedures according to three aspects: 1) *centralization vs. decentralization*, 2) *exclusiveness vs. inclusiveness*, and 3) *institutionalization vs. non-institutionalization*. The centralization of the candidate selection procedure means that candidates are being selected at the national level. In contrast, candidates are selected at the local level in a decentralized candidate selection. In inclusive candidate selection, a larger group of individuals, including party members, select the candidates. In contrast, a few people, mostly the party leaders, decide who the candidate will be in the exclusive selection procedure. Lastly, the institutionalization of the candidate selection procedure refers to the fact that the nomination procedure is formalized, i.e., there are rules to guide it, and the rules are both specific and explicit (Bjarnegård and Zetterberg 2011b, 2016; Bruhn 2003; Norris 1996b).

Drawing on the literature, I expected that parties with centralized, exclusive, and institutionalized candidate selection would have more female candidates and representatives than parties with decentralized, inclusive, or informal candidate selection procedures. I tested these hypotheses using six models, each with a different specification of the dependent variables. The first model assessed the impact of different candidate selection procedures on the total number of women candidates. The second model assessed the same with system-level variables added to the party factors. The third model assessed the impact of different candidate selection procedures on the number of list candidates. In the fourth model, I added system-level factors to the party factors. The fifth model assessed the impact of different candidate selection procedures on the number of women representatives elected by parties. System-level variables were also added to the sixth model.

Table 17 Description of models and variables

	1. model	2. model	3. model	4. model	5. model	6. model
Dependent variable	All women candidates	All women candidates	Only list candidates	Only list candidates	Women representatives	Women representatives
Independent variables	Party-level factors	Party-level factors System-level factors	Party-level factors	Party-level factors System-level factors	Party-level factors	Party-level factors System-level factors

Previous literature has been controversial on whether decentralized or centralized and exclusive or inclusive candidate selection procedures were more favorable to women's political representation. However, most studies have suggested that women's parliamentary representation is higher both when selectors consist of a narrow, exclusive group and when they make centralized decisions on candidates, excluding local levels. In contrast to the examined literature and studies, the results of this analysis contradict this finding. Namely, decentralized and inclusive candidate selection tends to result in a higher representation of women in the legislature than centralized and exclusive candidate selection. This suggests that parties should make their candidate selection procedures more democratic to achieve a higher proportion of female candidates. In practice, this means allowing participation in candidates' decision-making procedure to a broader range of people, both at the national and local levels.

The literature has also been inconclusive on whether formal or informal candidacy is more conducive to women's political participation. However, the results of the interviews suggest that the informal dimensions of the candidate selection currently favor men more than women. This is because men dominate politics and are less likely to allow women into the informal political arena. It may therefore be necessary to formalize and institutionalize candidate selection to leave little space for informality. Overall, democratizing and institutionalizing the candidate selection procedure benefits women's political representation On the other hand, the struggle for women's equality and why it is good to have more women in politics is now on the agenda everywhere. This may impact the electorate if they do not want to exercise power. On the other end of the spectrum, when decision-makers only involve a few members, they tend to seek and retain power and are, therefore, perhaps less open to being challenged from outside, such as from women.

The chapter also showed that there are differences not only in the way parties nominate candidates but also in the party families. One exciting result of the chapter is that parties whose main policy objective is sustainability (aka the "greens") are the only party family with a higher proportion of female elected representatives than candidates. This means that the Green parties nominate their women candidates for the winnable seats. In other party families, there are more female candidates than female representatives. This suggests that while candidacy does not always translate into representation in other parties, it is more likely to do so in the green parties. This is not a surprise, though the effect of the legislated gender quota was also significant, but only for getting women as candidates. In other words, parties

with legislated gender quotas tend to nominate more women but do not elect more women. This suggests that parties comply with the quota requirements and nominate a higher proportion of women, but they do not put women in the electable slots and get women into office. This also implies that quotas are not enough and thus should contain ranking order rules. Otherwise, they will not achieve their goal of a higher proportion of women in parliament.

In the fourth chapter, to support this finding, I examined the candidate selection procedures of political parties within a single country, Hungary, looking at several parties' different candidate selection procedures. I aimed to better understand how the centralization, inclusiveness, and institutionalization of the candidate selection procedure within a country are reflected in the official rules of political parties. On the other hand, it explored how candidate selection takes place in reality and what informal dimensions exist alongside the formal rules of the candidate selection procedure. The investigation of the party statutes showed that the formal rules of the parties are relatively similar. Indeed, there are minor differences between them. Some parties have more formalized candidate selection procedures and describe how they select their candidates in greater detail, while some are very vague about it. The analysis of formal rules allows placing parties on a scale along centralization, exclusiveness, and institutionalization of the candidate selection procedure. Scaling the parties allows us to see where they stand in relation to each other in Hungary.

Along the lines of institutionalization, LMP and Jobbik have the least institutionalized candidate selection. This is interesting because LMP usually has one of the highest proportions of female candidates, while Jobbik has the fewest. Momentum and LMP are the most centralized parties according to party rules, while Párbeszéd (which means dialogue in English), DK, Fidesz, Jobbik, and MSZP are relatively decentralized. Even though Jobbik and Fidesz are decentralized according to their written rules, this is not the case in reality. As I argued, there is ample evidence that Fidesz has one of the most centralized and exclusive selection procedures, with party leader Viktor Orbán personally deciding on all candidates. Regarding exclusiveness, Párbeszéd, DK, Fidesz, and Jobbik have a more exclusive candidate selection procedure, while the procedures of Momentum, MSZP, and LMP are more inclusive.

In fact, an examination of the formal rules shows that while the party statutes lay down the procedure for selecting and nominating candidates, the procedure diverges from written

rules. In most parties, candidates' actual selection is not necessarily the same under the formal selection and nomination procedure set out in the party's statutes and reality. This confirms previous findings that have suggested a large gap between how parties formally organize their candidate selection procedure on paper and what candidate selection is realized in practice.

This is confirmed by the interviews with candidates and those who select candidates, suggesting that this is mainly because informal norms often override formal rules. Many respondents pointed out that although parties have formal rules, they rarely select candidates according to formal rules. This may explain why, for example, parties that are considered decentralized or inclusive as per their formal rules still have a low proportion of female politicians. As stated in the interviews, informal practices in candidate selection appear in two ways: on the one hand, the selection of candidates in all parties is centralized and automated regardless of what is written in the party statutes. This means that the national party leadership decides who runs at the top of the party lists and in constituencies where victory is easier to achieve. Thus, they usually put themselves in the seats that are certain to be won. This ultimately also means that anyone who is a leader may not give someone else the winning district, regardless of gender. It is just that there are rarely any women party leaders.

On the other hand, lobbying and building personal networks are essential in the procedure of becoming candidates. Candidates who excel in lobbying and network building are those who stand out. However, the Hungarian society places caring responsibilities on women, often leaving them short of opportunities to cultivate personal relationships and lobby on their behalf. As a result, women are less likely to get nominations for good positions where they would have a chance to win because women and men have different opportunities. The main message is that, in reality, the candidate selection procedure is not always carried out according to the formal rules laid down in party statutes and is also influenced by informal rules. Thus, a party needs to pay attention to the informal norms that affect candidacy and the formal rules if women's higher political representation is crucial for them.

As a result, I found that an inclusive, decentralized, and institutionalized candidate selection procedure is beneficial to women's political representation. Therefore, I tested this hypothesis again through a quasi-natural experiment to determine whether these candidate selection dimensions positively impact women's political representation. Primaries are

inclusive, decentralized, and institutionalized forms of candidate selection. Thus, the fact that Hungary held primaries for the first time in the country's history in the autumn of 2021 provided an excellent opportunity to test this. Six opposition parties and civil candidates ran in single-member districts in these primaries. The primaries aimed to nominate a single joint opposition candidate in each of the 106 single-member districts because the logic of the electoral system suggested that this way, the opposition parties had the best chance of winning against the governing Fidesz party's candidates. This analysis aimed to understand how the gender of the candidate affects their chances of winning the primaries and whether women are more likely to be nominated in less winnable or swing single-member districts or not.

The results show that opposition parties nominated more women in single-member districts in the primaries than in previous general elections. Although, except for Jobbik, all the opposition parties are considered left and center parties, there are significant differences within the parties when it comes to women's numeric representation. DK and Momentum show the greatest commitment to women's representation in parliament. They have the most significant number of women candidates, many of whom run in seats where they have a real chance of winning against the governing party's candidate. By contrast, MSZP, which in principle has a 20 percent quota for women, nominated 70 percent of their female candidates in seats where they have no chance of winning. For MSZP, the non-winnable district meant that Fidesz was predicted to succeed in that constituency. Based on polling data and previous elections, a political analysis firm has categorized constituencies into three groups according to the opposition parties' chances of winning: winnable, swing, and unwinnable districts. The results of the interviews confirmed that opposition parties had used this analysis as a basis for calculating their chances. For this reason, I used this categorization in this analysis. The analysis suggests that it is not enough to nominate women in high numbers. What matters more is where women are nominated. The nomination of a higher number of women is often an act of appearance that makes the party look good but has no real consequences for women's descriptive representation.

The results of the multivariate models show that although the effect of gender has a negative sign, which means that women received fewer votes than men, the variable was not significant. Thus, gender did not significantly affect the votes received by candidates in the primaries. Hence, the hypothesis can be accepted, assuming that the vote shares of male and female candidates would not be affected by their gender. The results pointed to a more significant force behind winning. Suppose the candidate stands in the primary election as a

national or municipal representative. In that case, they receive a higher vote share than if they had not been a national or municipal representative.

Moreover, being a national party leader also results in a higher vote share (regardless of their gender). However, when I examined only mixed-gender single-member district races, the national representativeness variable lost its significance, but age and gender became significant in return. Although both effects were minimal, the second model suggests that older candidates receive more votes than younger candidates and women receive fewer votes than men. This also suggests that the logic of list compilation might be different from the nomination procedure for the single-member constituencies. A previous study argued that younger candidates are more likely to be placed in better positions on the list than older candidates (Papp 2017). However, the analysis of primaries indicates the opposite. This also suggests that different candidates are running for the list and the single-member district elections.

Furthermore, I assumed parties ran women in districts where victory was not obtainable, but the analysis shows that gender is not a significant variable here either. If a candidate is a national party leader or incumbent, they are more likely to run in single-member districts where victory can be secured than those who are not. This suggests that single-member district elections might not be as disadvantageous for women as previous Hungarian literature (Tóth and Ilonszki 2015a; Várnagy and Ilonszki 2012) has suggested. Alternatively, it means that primaries can at least reduce the potential negative impact of single-member constituency elections on women's political representation. This allows concluding that it is worthwhile for parties to experiment with candidate selection procedures and that primaries may be worth holding repeatedly.

As highlighted before, the candidate selection procedure has formal and informal dimensions. The two dimensions needed to be examined together to fully understand the effect of the candidate selection procedure on women's political representation. To achieve this, I analyzed the interviewees' responses and perceptions about a particular element of the candidate selection procedure. Previous empirical research suggests that women in the US and Canada often run for office in seats where they have no real chance of winning. Similarly, in the previous Hungarian literature, there was a consensus that women are more likely to be run similarly. The interviews confirm that women often run in unwinnable seats, and there are multiple reasons why women accept these hopeless seats. I found that women often do

not receive any opportunities at all, so even a bad position can be seen as an excellent "golden" opportunity for a better position in the future. In addition, women tend to be more loyal to the party and feel a sense of duty to the country than men, and therefore often take these nominations out of loyalty or commitment. Also, some women prefer to be involved in politics at the local government level, which is where the national electoral experience comes in handy. This suggests that some women think strategically about political engagement and participation.

My analysis not only revealed the narrative of both female and male candidates as well as female and male decision-makers of the nominees about accepting specific nominations but also about political ambitions and motivations. One of the main findings confirms what the literature suggests about the different motivations driving politicians to take on political roles and that these motivations could be gendered. The previous literature argues that people run for election to either raise awareness of political issues (Craig and O'Brien 1993; Fox, Lawless, and Feeley 2001; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), or ideological motivations (Thomas 1994), brought about by politicized upbringing (Beck and Jennings 1991; Flanigan and Zingale 2002), the desire to serve the party (Fowler 1977) and the pleasure of campaigning (Kazee 1980) may motivate potential candidates to run for elections. My dissertation suggests that while political upbringing is more likely to influence men's path, women are more likely to be driven by ideological motivations. While women are in politics specifically for others - for their community, party, or country -, men are often in politics for the political position or power itself. Of course, this could be women's perception of themselves, but one male interviewee confirmed that women are engaged in values-based politics. This gender difference can presumably be explained by gender socialization, as girls are more likely to be raised to care for others than boys. This also explains why women accept seemingly hopeless positions while men are more concerned with winning and power. However, this does not rule out the possibility that there are men who are in politics for similar principles.

7.2 Implications and Policy Recommendations

Previous literature has pointed out several explanatory factors, such as the electoral system or political culture, behind the low political representation of women. The qualitative parts of this dissertation have also confirmed that, for example, the culture of a country and the state of gender equality may contribute to women's low political representation. According to one interviewee, one of the reasons for political inequality is gender socialization and the fact that

boys and girls are brought up differently, which makes men more likely to enter politics than women. While these are important explanatory factors, changing an electoral system and culture is not easy or quick.

In contrast, in this dissertation, I have deliberately chosen to focus on those variables that are relatively easier to intervene in and on which policy changes can be made. I argue that changing the candidate selection procedure can bring an immediate breakthrough in women's political representation. Thus, I have addressed the role of the candidate selection procedure in women's political representation because parties can easily change how they select their candidates if they learn that it would benefit them.

The dissertation confirms feminist institutionalism theories and indicates that parties behave as gendered institutions. This means that parties offer different opportunities to women and men because of their institutional nature, which in many cases is independent of contextual environment, time, and space. Thus, there are systemic reasons for women's underrepresentation, much of which stems from the internal functioning of parties and the formal and informal rules that direct candidate selection procedures. For this reason, I believe that if parties were viewed as gendered institutions, one would be closer to understanding gender inequalities within parties and finding solutions to gender inequality in politics.

Although the principles of feminist institutionalism were professed throughout the dissertation, I first did not feel the need to use them as a theoretical framework throughout the dissertation. Now, after almost finishing the dissertation, I recommend that scholars and practitioners should indeed use the feminist institutionalism approach. The main reason I changed my position is that it became clear during my research that even in the most modern and left-wing parties, there are substantial gender inequalities. These imbalances can best be addressed and resolved by daring to state explicitly that these parties are truly gendered institutions.

My findings have important implications for party researchers and practitioners when designing and reforming political institutions, especially the candidate selection procedures of political parties and those who want to realize changes in women's political representation. First, my results show that the candidate selection procedure clearly determines women's political representation. Thus, parties should change their candidate selection mechanisms and procedures, as these are responsible for the low political representation of women.

Suppose parties fail to recognize their role in women's political representation and pretend not to act as gatekeepers to female candidates. In that case, there will be no meaningful change in women's representation in parliament.

The results showed a significant gap between how parties select their candidates according to formal rules and how they nominate candidates in practice. In reality, candidate selection is often more in the hands of one or a few leaders. Who becomes a candidate is influenced more by personal and informal relationships than by the candidate's qualities or attributes. The distinction between formal and informal rules of nomination has important implications for how we study political parties and women's political representation. Relying on how candidates are selected according to formal rules and ignoring that decisions about candidates are often made in a washroom, or a football dressing room can lead to little or no understanding of how parties work in practice and why the proportion of women in politics is not changing. According to Freidenberg and Levitsky (2006), informally organized parties behave differently from their more formal counterparts in areas such as electoral and legislative behavior and candidate selection. This dissertation also confirms that political parties operate much more informally, affecting their candidate selection. For this reason, ethnographic methods could be used to understand better party behavior rather than formal rules and quantitative research alone.

If parties want to change how they select and nominate candidates to increase women's political representation, two crucial aspects are to consider. On the one hand, the candidate selection procedure could be more decentralized, inclusive, and institutionalized so that informal relationships are less likely to prevail. On the other hand, examining what real opportunities are offered to male and female candidates in the selection procedure is essential. The reason for this is that the findings suggest that parties not only have a specific role in candidates' initial nomination but also control some aspects of electing women by placing them in winnable districts or at the top of party lists. In the candidate selection procedures, parties must nominate women in winnable positions and ensure that incumbent women are not deselected.

Moreover, the interview result suggests that party leaders are automatically promoted to winnable positions in many cases during the candidate selection procedure. Therefore parties should also give more opportunities to include women in party leadership positions. Furthermore, a professional female political elite must also be established for women's

representation in parliament to become stable. As the dissertation confirms the previous literature that gender does not significantly impact the voters' decision-making, parties should therefore be unconcerned about fielding more women in elections.

Since there are countries like Hungary, where women's political representation has stagnated for decades, the introduction of gender quotas would immediately change women's representation. Interviews show that, although politicians are divided on the issue, more and more of them feel that a quota is necessary. For this reason, I consider introducing a properly implemented legal quota a necessary instrument in many cases. The findings of the third chapter implicated that quotas should contain ranking order rules; otherwise, they will not achieve their goal of a higher proportion of women in parliament. Therefore, a good quota law specifies the proportion of women on party lists and includes a ranking provision. Otherwise, the parties would put women at the back of their lists, in seats from which they cannot get into parliament.

Furthermore, appropriate sanctions should be applied if the parties do not comply with the law. As previous empirical studies (Murray 2010) argue, the best motivation for parties to comply with the quota law is to be deprived of the right to stand in elections. In many cases, when financial sanctions are used, big parties can quickly pay the penalty because this is not a problem for them.

Overall, the thesis points out that, beyond political parties, parliament and civil society organizations may play a role in increasing women's political representation. For this reason, in the following, I address specific proposals to these three institutions, which could be implemented to ensure that more female candidates and representatives are selected and elected.

To the parliament

- Introduce a legal quota law that regulates the proportion and order of women on party lists. If parties fail to comply with the quota law, they should be disqualified from standing in elections as a sanction.
- Public funding for parties should be linked to the proportion of female candidates, encouraging parties to nominate more women in elections.
- Invite representatives of civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, to be consulted on critical gender issues.

- The parliament as a workplace should be more inclusive and family-friendly.
    - There should be childcare facilities, e.g., kindergarten,
    - Parliament's working hours should be adapted to ensure a work-life balance,
    - The culture and tone of parliamentary debate must be reviewed and developed.

To the political parties

- Put in place measures and guidelines (e.g., voluntary gender quota on party lists) to ensure that women are equally represented on the party list and in positions where they have a chance of being elected.
- Put in place measures and guidelines to ensure women are nominated in single-member districts that are winnable or likely to be won by the party.
- Increase the proportion of women among party leaders, decision-making bodies, and other elected party officials. The presence of female party leaders can lead to a greater female representation, and women leaders can also gain more winnable positions during the candidate selection procedure.
- Parties need to understand and accept that their candidate selection procedures play a vital role in the underrepresentation of women in politics. Therefore, their candidate selection and nomination procedure must be reviewed, modified, and improved.
    - Parties should use a decentralized candidate selection process that gives local organizations a more significant role in the selection of candidates.
    - Parties need to make the candidate selection procedure more inclusive to ensure that party leaders do not have the exclusive right to decide on candidates.
    - Parties need to institutionalize candidate selection and monitor that they are selecting their candidates according to the rules they have written down to minimize informal influences.
- Parties need to support declared women candidates in the earliest stages of their candidacies.
- Parties' internal decision-making procedures must be more transparent and inclusive towards women and other minority groups.
- Parties should adopt internal party regulations to increase women's involvement and participation in parties' internal procedures and structures.

- Parties should provide training, networking opportunities, and childcare facilities for women to be more encouraged standing for election.
- Establish cross-party networks that can co-operate in specific gender issues and, therefore, enhance women's substantive representation and gender equality in parliaments and beyond.
- Parties should be more inclusive and invite representatives of civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, to consult on critical gender issues.

To the civil society

- Civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, should focus their work more specifically on the issue of women's representation in politics and develop projects to increase women's political representation.
- Civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, should mobilize society and organize campaigns, especially before elections, to raise awareness of the importance of women's representation.
- Civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, should advocate for a gender quota law in parliament and for political parties to adopt a voluntary party quota.
- Civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, must critically review the selection procedures of political parties and draw attention to the lack of women politicians as candidates, representatives, decision-makers, and party leaders.

7.3 Contributions and Limitations

My dissertation has theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, I contribute to the discipline of political science by examining political science phenomena from a gender perspective. Although there is a growing body of work on parties' candidate selection procedures and women's representation, most are in Latin American, Western European, Asian, or African countries. In contrast, little literature focuses on the Central and Eastern European regions, and my dissertation expands the current literature by examining a less researched region and country. This research confirms the previous literature by showing that political parties are the primary gatekeepers of women's political representation in Eastern Europe, especially Hungary.

An essential contribution of the dissertation is that the seemingly gender-neutral candidate selection criteria set by party rules can often have unintended gender

consequences. This is why it is necessary to highlight that although these procedures may seem gender-neutral, they lead to gender inequality in politics. Therefore, it is necessary to see parties and the candidate selection and nomination procedure as gendered institutions. Because if the candidate selection procedure continues to be treated as a gender-neutral procedure with no differential effects on gender, parties will not change the nomination rules to increase the number of women in parliament. Another theoretical contribution is that majoritarian elections are not necessarily disadvantageous to women's political representation, as it is believed. At least, the analysis of primaries held in single-member districts suggests this. This also implies that primaries can reduce or balance the adverse impact of majoritarian electoral systems on women politicians. Thus primaries seem to be a more inclusive candidate selection procedure.

On the other hand, I contribute to the international literature that draws attention to the fact that the political parties literature is heavily based on Western European parties, assuming that there is a tight fit between how parties are formally organized and how they behave in practice. The Hungarian case shows that parties that are highly formalized on paper often behave quite differently in practice because informal relations are present in the actual organization. This may explain why, even in the case of decentralized, inclusive, and institutionalized parties on paper, women's political representation can be low when these forms of candidate selection would, in principle, be favorable to women.

Furthermore, I have contributed to the Hungarian literature by thoroughly examining the candidate selection procedure of several parties and introducing gender considerations into the analysis of the candidate selection procedure. So far, little research has been done on parties' candidate selection and nomination per se in Hungary, not to mention that little research has been done on its relationship with gender equality. The candidate selection procedure is an unknown and less researched area of Hungarian political science. However, I think I have successfully contributed to ensuring that it does not remain so.

In addition, very few databases on candidates are available, and in many cases, they are not of remarkably high quality. In Hungary, the election data on the website of the National Election Office are stored in a poor format, not ready to be analyzed immediately. For this dissertation, I have used data from the National Election Office to create several for all the elections of the last 32 years, in which much essential information about the candidates and

their representatives is present. I make these databases available to help other researchers by giving them access to these databases.

Thirdly, I think how I use different research methods in my dissertation may be novel. Not only have I conducted quantitative and qualitative research, but I have used them in such a careful way to check, validate, support, and even question each other's data and findings. This dissertation can serve as an excellent example for those who aim to do mixed-method research in the future. In many cases, the interviews helped to generate hypotheses for quantitative analysis. However, in many cases, they confirmed or refuted the results from the document analysis or the quantitative analyses. To triangulate this work, I also conducted surveys with aspirants who attended a political school intending to become politicians one day.

On the practical level, in my dissertation, I am confident that I have been able to show results and provide policy recommendations that could be used to increase the proportion of women in parliament if there is a real political will to do so. I also tried to draw attention in the dissertation to the importance of equal representation of women and men in political decision-making. Equal participation of women and men in politics is a fundamental requirement of democracy, leading not only to greater social equality, more inclusive governance, and higher living standards but also to positive impacts on education, health, and infrastructure development. The low proportion of women in political decision-making extends well beyond the walls of parliament. Men can, of course, represent women and issues that affect women just as well. However, without women politicians, laws and programs to reduce and eliminate discrimination against women are much less likely to be passed. The best example is the rejection of the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on preventing and eradicating violence against women and domestic violence in the Hungarian Parliament. Parliament could have passed this law if there had been more women.

At the same time, of course, the dissertation had its limitations. The first limitation is that candidate selection is one of most political parties' most hidden internal procedures. Moreover, it is many cases determined by informality. For this reason, to understand the candidate selection procedure even better, more qualitative research might have been needed. I conducted interviews with politicians precisely because I knew it was impossible to look at the candidate selection procedure in terms of numbers alone. However, in many cases, the parties or some politicians were not helpful or open to the idea of interviews. It was

not as easy to reach politicians as I thought at this research's beginning. Therefore, I could not interview people from all parties and not as many people as I would have liked. The comparative nature of the dissertation and the time constraints meant that I did not have enough time to develop a relationship of trust with all the parties in which I could gain insight into their internal procedures.

I considered interviews insufficient, mainly because they only provide information about the interviewees' perceptions. For this reason, I planned to conduct shadowing, a research method that has been in organizational research for a long time. It refers to a particular type of participant observation where the researcher is attached to a selected person for a specific period, which could be a day or even several weeks, and observes events, work procedures, and interactions, among other things in the organization through following the selected person (Bussell 2020; Smrek 2022). From the perspective of this dissertation, the advantage of this method would have been that I could observe in real-time how the candidate selection procedure happens. Moreover, I could have learned more about the candidate selection procedure by just being at meetings where candidate nomination and selection are discussed. As an outsider and a listener, I could have gained important insider information in real-time. To this end, I approached a politician who, after some persuasion, agreed to participate in the shadowing. However, they changed their mind at the last minute, and I no longer had the opportunity to find a new subject. Thus, I had to give up this research plan, and I had to take this as a lesson that I should always have a plan B, especially when the subjects are members of the elite who are busy.

7.4 Further Research Agenda

In drafting this dissertation, I have learned that selecting and nominating party candidates is still a very hidden procedure, which is worth studying in general and when someone is especially interested in seeing an increase in women's political representation. Much literature on women's political representation has thoroughly reviewed many explanatory variables. However, several aspects of the candidate selection procedures have not yet been explored. While it is well documented where and how parties nominate women, it is less known about who within the parties has the absolute power to select and nominate candidates and how exactly it is possible to become a candidate and then a representative in a party. Studying candidate selection procedures would bring us closer to understanding why parties are gendered institutions and how to change them to increase women's representation in politics. Examining the parties' nomination procedures of candidates is also crucial because

substantial policy changes could be achieved by reviewing them. Therefore, the relationship between the candidate selection procedures and women's representation should be explored in future research. For example, one could examine longitudinally how changes in party nomination rules affect women's political representation.

On the other hand, of the few women nominated, many often run in seats where they have no real chance of winning. In the previous chapter, the politicians were optimistic about the expected benefits of such nominations. Therefore, future studies should be conducted to investigate the long-term impact of accepting nominations in hopeless seats on candidates' career paths. It would be interesting to find out what women gain in the long run from hopeless seats or whether this is just a way of weeding women out of national politics.

This dissertation was written in the comparative politics track, which had certain limitations and constraints. First, my research needed to focus on a comparative analysis. Second, it is more required to conduct quantitative analyses in comparative politics. However, in new research, I would be less interested in studying how many different parties and countries are nominating and selecting their candidates. I would be more interested in how the candidate selection is conducted within a single party. Working on the qualitative part of the dissertation led me to conclude that the informal dimension of the candidate selection procedure often overrides the formal dimension and that parties are similar in this respect. For this reason, I think that party-based case study research would also contribute much to understanding parties' candidate selection procedures in general. In other words, a case study could reveal a lot about the internal workings of political parties in general and how they function as gendered institutions.

In addition, in terms of methodology, while quantitative research is important in many cases, researchers need to use more qualitative research methodology and tools to investigate parties' candidate selection procedures. Informal rules and norms prevail in politics and, more specifically, in candidate selection procedures, and to uncover and understand them, a deeper investigation is needed into these procedures. Based on my experience drafting this dissertation, I suggest going beyond interviews. Ethnographic and participatory research could be used in further research because the dissertation showed that limited information could be obtained from the interviews. On the other hand, ethnographic research is also needed to explore and measure how informal political party organizations function in practice. For this reason, the researcher needs to become embedded within a party, gaining the trust of the

interview subjects that will allow them to learn about dimensions of the candidate selection procedure that may hold much-added information. Of course, ethical considerations are important, and it must be clear to party members that there is a researcher's presence and broadly what the research is about.

The *realist feminist ethnography* seems to be an exciting new direction that I would like to explore more deeply as a research method in future research. It is a method that might be ideal for those (feminist) institutionalisms scholars who believe that institutions are entities with powers on their own that determine political behaviors and have political consequences (Danermark, Ekström, and Jan Ch. Karlsson 2019; Decoteau 2017; Lowndes 2019). The feminist ethnography method can help better understand how institutions are socially created and work in a gendered way. Observing these gendered institutions is essential to changing them. If there is a policy goal to increase women's political representation, researchers and activists need to learn about institutions and the inner workings of political parties. For policy-oriented researchers and practitioners to realize significant differences in gender equality and advocacy work, it is necessary to understand why and how political parties and other political institutions are gendered.

8 References

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9 Appendix 1: Interview Details

Party	ID	Date	Function	Gender
DK	Anna	01/11/2018	Local representative	F
DK	Kata	04/17/2018	Local representative, member of the party leadership	F
DK	Vera	05/097/2022	Candidate	F
P	András	12/15/2017	Has a specific role at the party	M
P	Péter	02/02/2018	Member of the party leadership	M
P	Bella	12/29/2017	Local representative, member of the party leadership,	F
Együtt	Zsófia	02/09/2018	MP	F
Együtt	László	04/26/2018	Candidate	M
Együtt	Jolán	05/11/2018	Local MP, member of the party leadership	F
MSZP	Nóra	12/15/2017	MP, president of a local organization, member of the party leadership,	F
MSZP	Mónika	01/09/2018	Former president of the party	F
MSZP	Gergely	05/03/2018	MP, Member of the party leadership,	M

			president of a local organization	
MSZP	Hanna	05/07/2018	MP, Member of the party leadership	F
Jobbik	Diána	02/13/2018	MP	F
Jobbik	Dániel	01/30/2018	MP, member of the candidate selection committee	M
Jobbik	Rita	04/16/2021	MP, member of the party leadership	F
Momentum	Barnabás	01/09/2018	President of the candidate selection committee	M
Momentum	Réka	12/22/2017	Candidate	F
Momentum	Ádám	02/01/2018	Member of the leadership, responsible for the campaign	M
Momentum	Judit	04/23/2021	Member of the party leadership, local representative	F
Momentum	Erika	04/26/2021	Aspirant/Candidate	F
LMP	Fruzsina	02/23/2018	Local representative, candidate, selector	F
LMP	Andrea	04/04/2018	Local representative, member of the party leadership	F

Liberálisok	Gábor	04/26/2018	Selector	M
Liberálisok	Barbara	05/11/2018	Candidate, MP	F
Együtt, értünk	Zita	04/17/2018	Candidate, former MP of the Jobbik	F
Fidesz	Attila	05/13/2018	Candidate, MP	M

10 Appendix 2: Interview Guide – Questions

1) Motivation + Getting into politics
    - How did you get into politics? What motivated you?
    - Who approached you, encouraged you, and helped you to enter politics?
    - To what extent did your immediate environment (family, friends) support your career in politics?
    - Is there anyone whose example inspired you to choose the political path? If so, who?
2) Parties and candidate selection
    - Who is involved in the candidate selection procedure, and who has a formal or informal role in the selection of candidates?
    - Who has a greater role in candidate selection: party headquarters or local organizations?
    - Who makes the final decision?
    - What influences the order of the national list and who compiles the list?
    - What role do informal contacts/relationships play in the selection of candidates?
    - How transparent is the candidate selection and nomination procedure for a person who wants to be a candidate of the party?
    - What qualities does a good candidate need?
    - What are the differences between a list candidate and a single-member district candidate?
    - In 2018 you were ranked X on the national party list, what influenced this position and can you expect a shift in the next elections? Why then did you run in the X district and why are you now running in the Y district now? Did your previous competitor decide not to run again?
    - In 2018, X percentage of women were on the list and X percentage of women in single-member districts. Is it expected that there will be less or more women on the list and in the individual candidates in 2022?
3) Women and politics
    - What are the main obstacles to women's political participation in Hungary?
    - Do you think it is easier or harder for a woman to succeed in politics than a man? What do you think are the reasons for this?

- Are there any parts of politics that are more difficult for women to access?
- How easy or difficult do you find the political situation of women in the world and in Hungary?
- Do you experience any discrimination based on gender in your work in politics/parliament? Where does this discrimination come from?
- Could you give an example of discrimination you have suffered?
- What does gender/being a woman mean in politics?
- What is the role of political parties in terms of women's political participation?
- Why are there more women candidates but no representatives?
- What opportunities are there for women politicians in your party, are there any women's platforms or programs/initiatives specifically for women, etc.?
- Do you think it is important to have more women in politics? If so, why?
- What do you think about the institution of a gender quota?

11 Appendix 3: Survey

1. What year were you born?
2. What is your marital status?
    a. Married/partnered
    b. Divorced/divorced
    c. Widowed/deceased partner
    d. Single
3. Who do you live with in your household?
    a. Parent
    b. Child
    c. Spouse/partner
    d. Sibling
    e. Other
    f. I live in a care home
4. Which term best describes the area where you live?
    a. Capital
    b. Big city
    c. The suburb of a metropolis
    d. Small town
    e. Village
    f. Farm
5. What is your highest level of education?
    a. Less than eight years
    b. Eight years completed
    c. Apprenticeship
    d. Vocational school - certificate
    e. Secondary school - certificate
    f. College/university bachelor's degree - BA/BSC
    g. Master's degree - MA/MSS/MSC
    h. Higher education with an academic degree
    i. Other, namely:
6. What is (was) your primary occupation?
7. Why did you decide to apply to the Horizont Political School for Women?
    a. I want to be a visible/well-known politician.

b. I want to work behind the scenes for a politician/political party.
c. Other, namely:

8. How important were the following factors for you when applying to Horizon Horizont Political School for Women?
    a. I wanted to learn more about politics and how it works.
    b. I wanted to meet people like me.
    c. I wanted to meet important and influential people.
    d. I wanted to get to know Momentum better.
    e. I wanted to learn political skills.
    f. I wanted to advance in my career and political career.
    g. I did not want to say no to someone who called me.
    h. Other:
9. Do you already hold any political office?
    a. I am a municipal councilor.
    b. I am an advisor to a political party.
    c. I am an expert in a political party.
    d. I am a volunteer/activist for a political party.
    e. I do not hold any political office.
    f. Other, namely:
10. Do you think you would like to be involved in politics in the future?
    a. Yes, I would like to.
    b. I do not know yet.
    c. I do not wish to.
11. Do you envisage a political career locally, nationally, or internationally?
    a. At the local/municipal level.
    b. At the national/parliamentary level.
    c. At the international/European Parliament level.
    d. Do not know.
12. How, when, and why did you decide to enter politics?
13. The following are some reasons that might influence someone's entry into politics. Thinking about the time, you decided to enter politics, rank the following statements in terms of how important they were in your decision.
    a. A sense of duty - I want to do something to make our country or society a better place.

b. A sense of duty - I want to help a political party.
c. I want to influence government policy.
d. I would like to have a role in government one day.
e. Other, namely:

14. Who approached you and encouraged you to enter politics?
    a. Someone contacted me through my family.
    b. Someone contacted me on a professional basis.
    c. Someone approached me on ideological grounds.
    d. Someone contacted me on an organizational-movement basis.
15. Is there someone whose example inspired you to choose the political path? If so, who?
16. People often talk about "left" and "right" in politics. Where would you place yourself on this scale, where "0" means left, and "10" means right?
17. What are the main obstacles to women's political participation in Hungary?
18. Do you think it is easier or harder for a woman to succeed in politics than a man?
    a. It is harder for a woman than for a man.
    b. It is harder for a man than a woman.
    c. It is just as hard for both.
    d. I do not know
19. What do you think is the reason for this?
20. How easy or difficult do you find the political situation of women in the world? 0 means very easy, 10 means very difficult.
21. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
    a. Women politicians are less able to make difficult decisions.
    b. Few women in parliament because women are less qualified to be politicians.
    c. I prefer to vote for a party that is interested in having as many women candidates as possible.
    d. Opposition parties should nominate a female candidate for prime minister in 2022.
    e. Women politicians should represent women.
    f. Women and men should have more women politicians.
22. There is much talk about the need for more women politicians. Do you think there would be something positive if there were more, and if so, what would it be?

23. The following reasons are said to influence women's low political participation. Why do you think there are so few women in politics? You can give more than one answer.
    a. Women politicians are not supported enough in their party.
    b. They do not have enough time for politics because of family commitments.
    c. A significant proportion of Hungarians would not vote for female candidates
    d. Women have higher expectations than men.
    e. Women are raised from childhood not to be involved in politics.
    f. Women are not tough enough for politics.
    g. Women politicians are not concerned with issues that voters are interested in.
    h. ☐ Do not know / do not want to answer
24. What do you think of the quota system if it would allow more women to enter politics?
    a. I fully support.
    b. More in favor.
    c. Both supportive and not.
    d. I prefer not to support.
    e. Not at all in favor.
25. What do you think are the most important gender inequality issues in Hungary today? You can tick more than one answer.
    a. Women are paid less than men.
    b. Child-rearing is seen by society as primarily the responsibility of women.
    c. Violence against women.
    d. Men have a lower life expectancy.
    e. Society expects men to provide for the family.
    f. Few women leaders in politics and business.
    g. Existing expectations and prejudices about the roles and appearance of women and men.
26. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements
    a. All ethnicities should be integrated into society.
    b. The state should reduce the administrative burden on private enterprises.
    c. Measures are needed to close the gap between rich and poor.
    d. The unity of the Hungarian community in the Carpathian Basin should be firmly embraced in foreign policy.
    e. The state should spend more money on education.

f. Stricter laws and regulations should be introduced to eradicate corruption.
g. Government should support environmentally friendly businesses.
h. Law enforcement agencies should be strengthened.

27. If you are or would be an elected politician, which policy issues would you be most and least concerned with? Pick three or three that interest you most and least (they do not have to be in order).
    a. Macroeconomic policy
    b. Human rights
    c. Health policy
    d. Agricultural policy
    e. Employment policy
    f. Education policy
    g. Environment policy
    h. Energy policy
    i. Immigration policy
    j. Transport policy
    k. Justice
    l. Social policy
    m. Territorial policy
    n. Finance and trade
    o. Defense
    p. Science policy
    q. Foreign economic policy
    r. Foreign policy
    s. Government operations
    t. Land policy
    u. Cultural policy