The Representation of Women in Israeli Politics

A Comparative Perspective

Policy Paper 10E

Assaf Shapira | Ofer Kenig | Chen Friedberg | Reut Itzkovitch-Malka

Why is it important for women to be represented in the Knesset and in cabinet? Are women who are elected to these institutions expected to do more to promote "female" interests than their male counterparts? What are the factors influencing the representation of women in Israeli politics? How has their representation changed over the years, and would the imposition of quotas be a good idea? This policy paper examines the representation of women in Israeli politics from a comparative perspective. Its guiding premise is that women's

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Abstract

For the past decade, the issue of women's representation in the political arena has taken center stage in academia and in public discourse. Underpinning the debate is the normative assumption that women's representation in politics, and parliaments in particular, carries great importance: it is consistent with the values of equality and representativeness, grants legitimacy to the democratic-liberal regime, and helps inculcate a view of women as citizens of equal standing with men.

Some would argue that women's parliamentary activity is essentially different from that of men, in part because women parliamentarians tend to deal with issues related to the status of women in society and to promote women's interests to a greater extent than do their male counterparts. According to this thesis, "descriptive representation," meaning a high proportion of women in parliament, is a precondition for "substantive representation," that is, the advancement of the interests and viewpoints shared by women. From a historical perspective, although there has been a genuine improvement in women's parliamentary representation in many countries in recent decades, in most cases equality has still not been achieved. This has led countries and parties that are aware of the importance of this issue to implement institutional measures aimed at improving women's representation in the political arena.

This policy paper is an attempt to contribute to this important debate. To this end it examines women's representation in politics over the years, and the factors affecting it, compares women's representation in Israel with that in other countries, and analyzes how descriptive

representation of women in the Knesset influences their substantive representation. The study also assesses the institutional mechanisms adopted in Israel to enhance women's representation in the Knesset, and proposes strengthening and supplementing the existing measures.

Women's Representation in Politics: A Comparative Overview

An examination of women's descriptive representation in the Knesset and the cabinet shows a genuine upward trend over the last twenty years. In the elections for the 19th Knesset (2013), a record 27 women were elected. There are four female ministers in the cabinet at present, also an all-time high, and three Knesset lists—Labor, Meretz, and Hatnua—are headed by women. Moreover, in contrast to previous years, and to the standard claim in the literature, women's representation in Israel's left-wing parties over the past decade has not outstripped their representation on the right. Nonetheless, even after the 2013 elections, women's representation in Israeli politics is far from satisfactory: the proportion of women in the population is 51%, yet only 22.5% of Knesset members and 18% of cabinet ministers are women. What is more, women are excluded from many parties, in particular the ultra-Orthodox and some of the Arab factions. Israel's situation is dismal in this regard in comparison with other countries as well: as of March 2013, Israel ranks 64th in the world in terms of the percentage of women in parliament, and places 20th among the 34 OECD states.

Representation of Women's Interests and Issues in the 17th Knesset and 18th Knesset

The link between the descriptive and the substantive representation of women is among the most interesting connections in the field of political

and gender studies. To understand its nature, we examined whether there are differences in patterns of parliamentary activity between male and female parliamentarians. In other words, do women concern themselves more than men with matters categorized in the literature as "women's issues" (for example, education, health, and children and family, along with subjects traditionally associated with women, such as maternity leave and battered women's shelters)? And if so, why? In keeping with the professional literature in the field—which is not unequivocal, but does clearly favor a certain perspective—we theorized that male and female parliamentarians in Israel are distinguished from one another in their patterns of parliamentary activity, and that women legislators engage, more than men, in issues whose purpose is advancing the status of women in society.

To obtain as comprehensive a picture as possible of the patterns of parliamentary activity among female members of Knesset (MKs), we looked at three major spheres of activity: legislation, parliamentary committees, and parliamentary questions. We selected these subjects since, in our opinion, they faithfully reflect the key areas of involvement of male and female MKs. The findings indicate that women are in fact more involved than men in areas considered "women's issues." This finding holds true for all indices examined in this study. However, despite the differences in patterns of activity between male and female MKs, it is important to note that this does not mean a binary division between the sexes, and that on many subjects—for example, education, health, and social welfare—men and women MKs are involved to a similar extent.

Two areas were identified in the study as fields that female MKs definitely engage in to a greater extent than their male colleagues: so-called women's issues, and children and family concerns. This leads us to two primary conclusions: first, in these particular areas a rather patriarchal attitude has been retained among both male and female parliamentarians, according to which women bear the major

responsibility for the home, for child-rearing, and for running the family; and second, it is the female MKs who are most concerned with advancing gender equality and the status of women in society. The latter conclusion offers a major normative justification for increasing the parliamentary representation of women. The question, then, is how to accomplish this goal.

How Can Women's Representation in the Knesset Be Improved?

The research literature enumerates a range of factors affecting women's parliamentary representation. Many of these are sociocultural factors that are difficult to change, certainly in the short term: political culture, religious attitudes, women's education, and their participation in the work force, to name a few. But coupled with these are institutional factors, which can be altered by means of the right reforms. Some of these institutional factors relate to the electoral system; but in the case of Israel it is difficult to implement reforms in this area that would help advance the representation of women in the Knesset, since the nature of the current electoral system—a proportional representation-list system and one large electoral district (of 120 representatives)—already eases the way, in theory, for women to get elected to the Knesset.

Another institutional feature, which actually makes it harder for women to be elected, is the size of Israel's parliament—or more correctly, its lack of size. Israel's legislature is one of the smallest parliaments in the world, relative to the number of citizens. The notion that a small parliament has a negative impact on women's representation is based on the assumption that women generally have fewer political assets (financial resources, media exposure, ties with interest groups and political elites, and the like) than do men; consequently, most women are placed in low slots on their party's list. For this reason, enlarging

the Knesset is expected to increase not only the number of women representatives but also their proportion of the total.

To test this theory, we examined how women's representation would change if the number of MKs rose to 180. The findings indicate that such an increase would moderately improve the proportion of women in the Knesset: in the 17th Knesset, their share would have risen by 2.5 percentage points; and in the 18th Knesset, by 1.4 percentage points. In absolute numbers, the change can be seen as more significant, namely, an addition of 13 women MKs in each of these two Knesset assemblies.

Another institutional mechanism that countries can adopt to increase women's parliamentary presence is that of quotas for the representation of women. The use of such quotas began in the 1970s and is becoming more widespread; some even consider it to be the most important electoral reform of recent years. It is customary to distinguish between three types of quotas: in the first type—reserved seats—the law stipulates that a certain number or percentage of parliamentary seats will be allocated exclusively to women. But this type of quota is only typical of non-democratic countries. By contrast, the second type—legislated quotas—is common in many democracies, primarily Catholic countries in Europe or Latin America, such as Spain, Portugal, Belgium, France, Ireland, Poland, Slovenia, and Costa Rica. These quotas are based on laws stating that each party running in an election must guarantee that a specific number or proportion—generally one third to one half—of its candidates consist of women. In certain countries, the law also mandates that women be placed in specific slots (in the case of elections based on ranked party lists). In some countries, parties that do not meet these requirements are disqualified, and in others, a portion of the parties' funding is withheld. The third type—voluntary party quotas—is the most common system in democratic countries, including many of the countries that have passed quota legislation, as well as the democracies of northwestern Europe (Germany, Norway, and Sweden). It refers to an obligation that the party takes upon itself—willingly and on its own

initiative—to adopt representation quotas for women. In other words, the party adopts provisos by which it determines the proportion and position of women on the party list. The usual quotas in established democracies range between 20% and 50%.

Although the use of representation quotas—whether voluntary or mandated by law—has been harshly criticized at times by scholars and politicians, in our view it is an effective, normatively justified means of improving women's parliamentary representation. Voluntary and legislated representation quotas appear to be particularly effective and reasonable in countries similar to Israel, where the status of women in society is already quite established (in most sectors of the population) but their representation in parliament is still low. In these countries, quotas are likely to contribute both to women's parliamentary representation and to further improvement in the overall status of women in society.

But even in these countries, quotas (both voluntary and legislated) are liable to fall short of their goal unless the regulations and procedures relating to their implementation are difficult for parties to circumvent. Rules must therefore be put in place governing not only the percentage of women on a party list, but also their share of safe slots, including the highest positions. Likewise, sanctions imposed for non-compliance with a legally-mandated quota should have deterrent value. To avoid a situation where women end up competing only for the slots allocated to them under the quota system—which would effectively "freeze" the proportion of women in parliament—one of three types of quotas should be adopted: high quotas, gradually increasing quotas, or quotas intended solely for new women candidates. In order to counteract arguments against quotas on normative grounds as undermining competition and principles of equality between candidates, the quotas should be only temporary, to be eliminated as soon as the desired representation of women in parliament is achieved. Finally, establishing a provision whereby parties that do not meet the quota requirements can run in elections and sit in parliament, but with greatly reduced funding, could

strengthen the normative justification for legislated party representation quotas and the chances of their adoption.

Recommendations: Adoption of Quotas for Women's Representation

Based on these principles, we have formulated two key recommendations for women's representation quotas:

1. **Voluntary party representation quotas** – These quotas have been common in many Israeli parties since the 1990s. In the elections for the 19th Knesset, five parties (of those that exceeded the electoral threshold) implemented quotas, though the percentage set by three of them was rather low (20% or less). Higher quota levels, as practiced in many democracies, were adopted only by the Balad and Meretz parties (33% and 40%, respectively). As a result, the quotas adopted did not contribute greatly to enhancing women's representation in the Knesset.

    ✓ We recommend that all parties in Israel adopt voluntary party representation quotas under which the party's Knesset list would contain no less than 40% of candidates from each gender. More precisely, we propose that at least two candidates of each gender be included in each successive group of five candidates on the ranking list of party candidates (1–5, 6–10, and so on). Further, it should be established at the outset that the quotas will be abolished if they are not applied in two consecutive elections ("not applied" refers to situations where there is no need to "bump" women up the list). In parties where the share of women is low at present, we recommend raising the quota gradually.

2. **Legislated quotas** – Over the past two decades, more than 20 private members' bills advocating legislated quotas have been brought before

the Knesset. Some of them called for barring parties that did not meet the mandated quotas from running in elections, while others endorsed financial incentives for parties that did meet the quotas. None of these bills passed.

✓ We recommend amending the Party Funding Law of 1973 to provide additional party funding to factions that meet the quotas. In the opinion of the Knesset's legal advisors, enacting this bill would require an absolute majority of 61 MKs, since it conflicts with the principle of equality as detailed in section 4 of the Basic Law: The Knesset. For a faction to qualify for additional party funding, its list of candidates should include: (a) at least 3 candidates of each gender in each consecutive group of 10 (1–10, 11–20, and so on); (b) at least 30% of candidates from each gender in safe slots, that is, within the range of the number of seats that the faction won in the previous election; (c) at least one candidate of each gender in the top five slots. For every candidate elected to the Knesset from the less-represented gender, the party would receive one additional unit of funding for its campaign expenditures—a significant incentive. According to this proposal, in the 19th Knesset, Meretz would have increased its campaign funding by 55% over the present level, and Yesh Atid, by 40%. As with the voluntary representation quotas, here too we recommend that the proposed amendment to the Party Funding Law be nullified if there are at least 40% of MKs from each gender (on the date the Knesset is convened) for two consecutive Knesset terms.

Implementation of these recommendations is expected to greatly improve the representation of women in the Knesset. Based on examples from numerous established democracies, this is an achievable goal. According to our study, the proposed measures would make a normative contribution to bolstering Israel's liberal-democratic regime and truly advancing the status of women in Israeli society.

Introduction

In February 2012, MK Zehava Gal-On was elected leader of her party, Meretz, joining the then opposition leader, MK Tzipi Livni (Kadima), and MK Shelly Yachimovich (Labor) to create a rare state of affairs in which the leaders of three parties represented in the Knesset were women. At that time, the number of female Knesset members had reached a peak, with 24 female Knesset members serving in the 18th Knesset (one-fifth of all MKs), while the president of the Supreme Court of Justice was Dorit Beinisch. A few months earlier, Orna Barbivai had been appointed as the head of the IDF Human Resources Directorate, becoming the first woman to be promoted to the rank of Major General. These circumstances may indicate a remarkable improvement in women's representation in Israel, but there remains a long road ahead to equal representation between men and women in the political elite.

The issue of women's representation in the political arena in general, and in legislatures in particular, has been a focus of public debate and of research over the last decades. The underlying assumption typical of this debate is that the presence of women in politics is positive in terms of democratic values such as representativeness, equality, and pluralism, and the discussion is driven by the fact that, in most countries, the proportion of women among elected r e presentatives is low compared to their proportion in the general population. This gap has led states and parties to adopt institutional measures aimed at increasing the representation of women in the political arena. Scholars, for their part, examine the factors influencing women's repr e sentation in political institutions, and assess whether there is a difference between the attitudes and behaviors of male and female politicians.

This policy paper seeks to compare the representation of women in the political arena in Israel with that in other countries, and to examine whether this representation influences parliamentary behavioral patterns. In addition, in light of the need to improve women's representation in Israel, the paper will propose institutional mechanisms that, if adopted, may facilitate such an improvement.

The paper consists of five chapters. The first chapter discusses the various concepts of "representation"—descriptive versus substantive representation—and the importance of the representation of women in politics. The second chapter contains two sections that focus on descriptive representation: the first examines the (growing) presence of women in political roles, as heads of government and heads of state, as ministers, and as legislators; while the second reviews the factors which influence the proportion of women in parliament. The third chapter explores substantive representation, based on an empirical analysis of different aspects of parliamentary activity of the members of the 17th and 18th Knesset assemblies, and examines the evidence for differences in patterns of parliamentary activity between male and female legislators. The fourth chapter focuses on gender quotas in a comparative perspective and in Israel, while the concluding chapter summarizes the research findings and presents recommendations for the adoption of gender quotas in Israel.

Chapter One
What is Political Representation?

The scholarly literature distinguishes between two forms of political representation: *descriptive representation*, also known as "representation as presence," and *substantive representation*, also known as "representation of ideas." These offer two different ways of thinking about the nature of political representation: one is based on the representative's personal characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, religion, or age, while the other addresses the representative's views and actions. According to the first approach, political representation requires a social similarity between the representative and those represented—in our case, similarity of gender. According to the second, representation requires the representative to hold similar perceptions and interests to those represented (Pitkin 1967; Phillips 1995).[1]

The representation of women in key political positions can thus be examined in two ways, based on the distinction between these two conceptual approaches: an examination of descriptive representation, that is, the proportion of women in parliament and in other political arenas; and an examination of substantive representation, that is, the extent to which the perceptions and interests of women are reflected in the political and parliamentary work of women legislators, for example in the field of legislation (Phillips 1995; Diaz 2005; Wängnerud 2009). Despite a perceived contradiction between these two approaches,

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[1]   In this study we do not distinguish between the representation of perceptions or ideology and the representation of interests. However, such a distinction does appear in the literature. See for example Squires 1996, 80.

they can in fact be placed on the same continuum. At one end of this continuum will be purely descriptive representation; next along will be a form of descriptive representation that also includes elements of substantive representation; further along, we will find a form of substantive representation that includes descriptive elements; and at the far end will be purely substantive representation.

Proponents of the descriptive representation approach would argue that the essence of political representation lies in the identity and characteristics of the representatives, and not in their actions. Thus, it could be radically argued that only women can represent women, only Arabs can represent Arabs, only ultra-Orthodox Jews can represent ultra-Orthodox Jews, and so on (Mansbridge 1999). Consequently, we must strive for the legislature to be as exact a replica of society as possible, a kind of reflection or miniature version of reality, with all its rifts and its multitude of identities. Hanna Pitkin, the author of one of the seminal books on political representation, summarizes the principle underpinning descriptive representation as follows (Pitkin 1967, 61): "Representation is about being something rather than doing something." The underlying logic, then, is that in order to represent any group of the population—that is, to map its precise needs and to advance its interests—the representative should perfectly identify with that group. In order for such complete and absolute identification to exist, the representative must share common characteristics with the population that he or she aims to represent.[2]

However, others would argue that there is no need for the existence of common characteristics between the representative and the population being represented in order to create an identity of interests between the two. According to this view, we have to focus not on characteristics,

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2   The concept of descriptive representation is not free from criticism, especially with regard to women's representation. For more details, see Diamond 1977; Mansbridge 1999; Farrell and Scully 2007.

but on the perceptions and views, and particularly the actions, of the representative. A woman elected to parliament, for example, does not automatically represent the interests of all women in society just because she is a woman. She may represent feminine or masculine interests, feminist or even chauvinistic interests, all depending on the actions she chooses to take. According to this approach, in its purest form, it could be argued that a parliament which is entirely composed of middle-class, middle-aged men, for example, can faithfully represent society as a whole, as long as the policies that it formulates promote the interests of all society's members, and not just those of one elite group or another.

Normative arguments for the equal inclusion of women in politics rely, of course, on the principles of justice and equality. If women compose half the population, it is only fair that they constitute half the elected officials and decision makers. Many proponents of this argument feel that the lack of participation of such a large and prominent part of society in political life undermines both the democratic legitimacy of government institutions and public trust in these institutions (Norris 1996b). It has also been suggested that, due to biological, psychological, or sociological gender differences, women bring a different set of experiences and attitudes to political life (Kelly, Saint-Germain, and Horn 1991). The most common argument in this context is sociological, and holds that the prevailing social construction creates a distinction between men and women throughout all stages of life. Thus women have fundamentally different life experiences from men, and subsequently different perceptions, priorities, and behaviors. These are likely to affect the conduct of women in the political arena (Squires 1996). For example, women are likely to speak differently not only about issues traditionally associated with women, such as fertility rights, abortion, women's health, and children's education, but also with regard to other, more general, issues such as transportation, foreign policy, economics, and so on (Norris 1996b). Consequently, it can be argued that the different attitudes voiced by female legislators represent

women in society more faithfully. This is because they share common characteristics with all women in society, and as a result also share common experiences, and some might say even a common worldview. In other words, there can be no authentic substantive representation without descriptive representation. Descriptive representation is thus a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for women's representation in politics.

1. From Descriptive to Substantive Representation

Many scholars have addressed the interaction between the two types of representation, and in particular attempted to give an answer to the most intriguing question of all: Does descriptive representation lead to substantive representation, and if so, under what circumstances?[3] In other words, many scholars have sought to examine whether women serving in key political positions (especially as parliamentary legislators) truly represent women in society; whether female legislators tend to promote the interests of women in society more than their male counterparts do; whether female legislators make it their highest priority to promote the interests of women in society; and whether the entry of women to a state legislature influences the way it behaves.

The research findings in this area are inconclusive, and sometimes even contradictory. Some studies find that female presence in the legislature can lead to a change in policy and discourse, due to the different nature of masculine and feminine politics. Other studies do not find any differences (or find rather minor differences) between the style and conduct of female politicians and those of male politicians (Childs and Krook 2009).

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3   See for example: Carroll 1994; Thomas 1994; Hoskyns 1996; Norris 1996a; Burrell 1997; Wängnerud 2000; Stewart 2001; Meyer 2003; Bratton 2005; Heath, Schwindt-Bayer, and Taylor-Robinson 2005; Schwindt-Bayer 2006; Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007; Childs and Krook 2009.

Those who believe that descriptive representation does lead to substantive representation offer several explanations. Firstly, some argue that, even if we acknowledge the heterogeneity of women as a group, it is possible to identify certain basic perceptions and interests that are common to all women, and which they seek to promote. These are related to the condition of women in society, and to the struggles against discrimination (in the labor market, the economy, in politics) and sexual harassment, and on behalf of equality, childcare, and the like (Phillips 1995; Lovenduski and Norris 2003; Wängnerud 2009). Secondly, it is claimed that only women can represent these interests and perceptions. This argument relies on the fundamental proposition that only if the representative shares an identity with those represented, and only if the representative has had similar life experiences to theirs, can the representative properly understand the needs of the represented. In other words, the claim is that descriptive representation is a condition for substantive representation (Kymlicka 1995; Katz 1997).

Thirdly, it is argued that, in their political work, female elected representatives give voice to women's common perceptions and interests. This argument is supported by empirical studies showing that women legislators seek to promote a female agenda more than men legislators (Burrell 1996; Gerrity, Osborn, and Mendez 2007; Lawless and Fox 2010). It should be noted that while this may well be the result of female legislators' perceptions and interests, it could also be the result of the constraints faced by women legislators in parliament. As we will further explain, women legislators are often excluded from some of the most important, powerful, and prestigious areas of parliamentary activity, and are thus "forced" to concentrate on other issues.

Other approaches do not focus on the level of the individual female or male legislator, but rather on the collective impact of women on the promotion of feminine goals in parliament. This type of research is related to a central theory in the substantive representation literature, namely, the theory of critical mass. This states that, in order to play a

significant role in parliament and to affect the products it generates, women must cross a minimum threshold of representation, that is, to reach a level of "critical mass." As long as women in parliament are marginal in numbers, their impact on its outputs will also be marginal. However, as the proportion of women in the legislature increases, and women grow from a marginal minority into a group which acquires presence and importance, their impact on policy also becomes significant (for more on this theory, see Appendix A).

In contrast, other scholars question whether descriptive representation strengthens substantive representation, deploying several arguments. First, it is argued that women in general, and female legislators in particular, do not necessarily have a feminine agenda they wish to promote; even if women do have common interests and perceptions, the differences among them of race, social status, age, and ideology are much more significant. These differences are particularly striking among female legislators who are found to be committed to their party and its ideology, much more than to particular feminine interests (Dodson and Carroll 1991; Swers 2002). Other scholars even claim that it is impossible to identify all the perceptions and interests unique to women, because these interests are time-dependent and derived from the local context (Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers 2007).

Second, it is argued that even if women have a feminine agenda that they wish to promote, the formal and informal structures of the legislature can prevent them from doing so. In many parliaments, for example, the norm is for a member of parliament to exhibit masculine traits. For this reason, female legislators feel that addressing and promoting female issues might be harmful for them, and try to avoid doing so (Carroll 2001). In many parliaments women are also excluded from centers of power, especially from important committees and from the role of committee chair (Norton 1995), which makes it harder for women legislators to promote their agenda.

Third, contrary to the theory of critical mass it is argued that high descriptive representation of women may actually harm women's substantive representation. For example, a high proportion of women in parliament may trigger a counter-reaction by male legislators, who may perceive female legislators as their political rivals and take tactics aimed at excluding them from the centers of power and curbing their initiatives to improve the status of women in society (Hawkesworth 2003). Alternatively, as long as the percentage of women in parliament remains low, female members of parliament are likely to be perceived by their parties, and by themselves, as representatives of women, and thus remain focused on related issues (Elise Crowley 2004; Diaz 2005). Conversely, as the percentage of women increases, it is expected that many of them—especially those in senior positions or who aspire to be in such positions—will focus less on issues relating to the status of women, and try to advance themselves by addressing more general issues instead (Carroll 2001).

As explained in the introduction, this study examines women's representation in both its descriptive and substantive forms. Our basic assumption is that the under-representation of women in the central decision-making political arenas—parliament and government—impairs the quality of democracy. This assumption requires an explanation, which we will try to provide below.

We shall begin by stating that the under-representation of women among elected representatives harms representation itself, which is a fundamental principle of modern democracy. This is the focus of the descriptive representation approach, according to which women, who form half of the population, should constitute half of society's elected officials. Additionally, many scholars believe that low descriptive representation of women also hampers their substantive representation. In any case, it is important to note that even scholars who question the real impact of descriptive representation on substantive representation acknowledge that descriptive representation is significant in and of itself.

The relatively sparse presence of women in politics can also be perceived as contravening the principle of equality, another central principle of modern democracy. We should distinguish between two different approaches to equality: the *procedural approach*, which holds that equality (in the case of women) is expressed in having procedures that grant men and women equal rights; and the *substantive approach*, which holds that equality is expressed by these rights being exercised equally well by men and women. The substantive approach assumes that if the exercise of rights is not equal, this could indicate the existence of informal barriers that prevent the advancement of women, so that the professed equality is not necessarily "real." Using this approach, a low proportion of women among decision-makers implies that rights are not being exercised equally by women, and thus the principle of equality is not being fulfilled (Diaz 2005).[4] Along the same lines, the statement from the United Nations' Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952) declared that "the contracting parties . . . desiring to equalize the status of men and women in the enjoyment and *exercise* of political rights" [our emphasis].

The damage caused to the democratic principles of representation and equality due to the under-representation of women may undermine the legitimacy of the political system and the democratic system as a whole, particularly—but not exclusively—among women (Phillips 1995; Diaz 2005; Lawless and Fox 2010).

Moreover, the proportion of women in the political arena affects political culture: a high proportion of women creates visibility, provides women with symbolic recognition, and can be expected to promote a perception of women as citizens who are as equally as valuable as men, with their own skills and an independent political identity (Burrell 1996; Lawless and Fox 2010; Krook and O'Brien 2010). Since political culture affects political behavior, a high rate of women in politics may also increase women's overall political participation.

4   For a similar view see Dahlerup 1998.

Finally, according to the school of "difference feminism," the political activity of women is characterized by patterns of cooperation, compromise, and more open communication with colleagues, and is significantly different from men's political activity, which is characterized by competition and is based on hierarchical relationships. According to these claims, feminine characteristics may have a significant and positive impact on policy-making processes.[5]

5   For a review of studies supporting this view see Lawless and Fox 2010, 6–7.

Chapter Two
Descriptive Gender Representation

This chapter contains two sections. The first examines the growing presence of women in political positions: as heads of government or heads of state, as ministers, and as legislators. The second focuses on the diverse factors that influence the proportion of women in parliament.

1. Women in Key Political Positions in Israel: A Comparative Portrait

As mentioned above, in early February 2012 there were three parties represented in the Knesset headed by women, and the number of women legislators reached a historical high of 24 (this record was broken after the 2013 elections, in which 27 women were elected to the 19th Knesset). At that point there were only three women ministers out of a total of 30, and nearly forty years have passed since a woman served as prime minister. In this section we will discuss the developments in the representation of women in the central political arenas in Israel (prime minister, government, and Knesset) over time, and compare them to similar developments in other countries.

Women at the Top: Prime Ministers and Presidents

The presence of women in leadership positions is not a new phenomenon. Since the dawn of history women have held powerful positions, but in almost all cases these were female rulers belonging to royal dynasties—in ancient Egypt, imperial China, Britain, and

elsewhere—who served as empresses or queens. By contrast, democracy was largely a closed male domain in its early days, and only in the twentieth century did women begin to have a presence in the political arena. The road to equal political representation was, and still is, long and slow. And, in most cases, including in Israel, it has not yet reached its conclusion.

Finland was the first country to elect a female MP to its legislature, in 1907. In the United States the first woman was elected to the House of Representatives in 1916, and to the Senate in 1922. Britain first elected a woman to parliament in 1919, New Zealand in 1933, and Australia in 1943. The first woman to be appointed as a minister in the cabinet of a modern democracy was the education minister of Denmark, in 1924. More than three decades passed until a women came to serve as a country's leader. This breakthrough occurred in Sri Lanka, with the 1960 appointment of Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike. Six years later, the second female prime minister was India's Indira Gandhi, and was followed shortly thereafter, in 1969, by Golda Meir, making Israel one of the pioneer countries in the field of political gender equality. Leaders such as Isabel Perón (Argentina, 1974), Margaret Thatcher (UK, 1979), Gro Harlem Brundtland (Norway, 1981), and Benazir Bhutto (Pakistan, 1988) marked the continuation of the road.

However, these early examples were exceptional in the global political landscape, and the presence of women in high office was a very rare phenomenon. It seems that this situation began to change from the late 1990s, when a larger number of women reached the uppermost political echelons in many countries around the world. Table 1 gives the names of the women who have served as prime ministers or presidents since the year 2000 (including those whose tenure began earlier). In total, 37 women—17 of whom serve today, as of April 2013—have served as prime minister or president over this period, the highest number to date.

Table 1: Women Serving as Prime Ministers or Presidents* between 2000 and April 2013

Leader	Position	Country	Period
Alenka Bratušek	Prime Minister	Slovenia	2013–
Park Geun-hye	President	South Korea	2013–
Joyce Banda	President	Malawi	2012–
Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf	President	Switzerland	2012
Helle Thorning-Schmidt	Prime Minister	Denmark	2011–
Yingluck Shinawatra	Prime Minister	Thailand	2011–
Atifete Jahjaga	President	Kosovo	2011–
Dilma Rousseff	President	Brazil	2010–
Iveta Radičová	Prime Minister	Slovakia	2010–2012
Julia Gillard	Prime Minister	Australia	2010–
Mari Kiviniemi	Prime Minister	Finland	2010–2011
Roza Otunbayev	President	Kyrgyzstan	2010–2011
Laura Chinchilla	President	Costa Rica	2010–
Kamla Persad-Bissessar	Prime Minister	Trinidad and Tobago	2010–
Doris Leuthard	President	Switzerland	2010
Dalia Grybauskaite	President	Lithuania	2009–
Jadranka Kosor	Prime Minister	Croatia	2009–2011
Johanna Sigurdardottir	Prime Minister	Iceland	2009–
Zinaida Greceanîi	Prime Minister	Moldova	2008–2009
Cristina Fernández de Kirchner	President	Argentina	2007–
Pratibha Patil	President	India	2007–2011
Micheline Calmy-Rey	President	Switzerland	2007, 2011
Michelle Bachelet	President	Chile	2006–2010
Ellen Johnson Sirleaf	President	Liberia	2006–
Portia Simpson Miller	Prime Minister	Jamaica	2006–2007, 2012

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$\longrightarrow$

Leader	Position	Country	Period
Yulia Tymoshenko	Prime Minister	Ukraine	2005, 2007– 2010
Angela Merkel	Prime Minister	Germany	2005–
Anneli Jäätteenmäki	Prime Minister	Finland	2003
Megawati Sukarnoputri	President	Indonesia	2001–2004
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo	President	Philippines	2001–2010
Tarja Halonen	President	Finland	2000–2012
Helen Clark	Prime Minister	New Zealand	1999–2008
Mireya Moscoso	President	Panama	1999–2004
Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga	President	Latvia	1999–2007
Mary McAleese	President	Ireland	1997–2011
Sheik Hasina Wajed	Prime Minister	Bangladesh	1996–2001, 2009–
Chandrika Kumaratunga	President	Sri Lanka	1994–2005

* The list includes ceremonial presidents (similar to the role of the Israeli president), but does not include prime ministers in presidential or semi-presidential systems.

Despite the fact that Israel belongs to the minority of countries in which a woman has occupied the highest political position, all eight prime ministers appointed since 1974 (when Golda Meir resigned) have been men. Tzipi Livni is the only woman for whom the post was within reach, after she received a mandate from the president to form a government in September 2008. However, her coalition negotiations were unsuccessful, and the opportunity was missed. It should also be noted that all nine Israeli presidents have been men. Colette Avital is the only woman to have been a candidate for the position, in the presidential election of 2007. However, Avital came in third after Shimon Peres and Reuven Rivlin.[6]

6   Prior to the elections, Dalia Itzik served as acting president in her capacity as speaker of the Knesset, following President Moshe Katsav's resignation. Katsav's resignation took effect on July 1, 2007, and Itzik served as acting president for two weeks.

Women in Government

As noted above, with her appointment as prime minister in February 1969, Golda Meir became one of the first women in the world to hold her country's highest political office. However, this may give the false impression that the representation of women in Israeli governments was impressive. Far from it; over the first 25 years of Israeli governments (1974–1949) there was only one woman who sat at the cabinet table, and she was the same woman who became prime minister. Aside from Meir, the cabinet was entirely male. Next to occupy a ministerial position were Shulamit Aloni (1974), Sarah Doron (1983), Shoshana Arbeli-Almozlino (1986), and Ora Namir (1992). Thus up until 1995, over a period of 46 years, only five women served in the Israeli government. From 1996 to the present day, a period of 17 years, the situation has improved somewhat, and nine other women have served as ministers (see Table 2). As of April 2013, only 14 out of the 230 politicians (6.1%) who have served as ministers in Israeli governments were women.[7]

The impression of acute inequality given by the small proportion of women among the total population of ministers is only reinforced by looking at three related parameters, which help to paint a more complete picture: (1) the importance of the ministries assigned to women; (2) the number of women in each government separately; and (3) the proportion of women in Israeli governments compared to their proportion in other countries.

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7   Nine other women held the position of deputy minister: Miriam Taasa-Glazer, Masha Lubelsky, Marina Solodkin, Dalia Rabin-Pelossof, Naomi Blumenthal, Gila Gamliel, Lea Nass, Tzipi Hotovely, and Fania Kirshenbaum.

Table 2: Female Ministers in Israeli Governments

Name	Year appointed minister (earliest)	Faction
Golda Meir	1949	Mapai
Shulamit Aloni	1974	Ratz
Sarah Doron	1983	Likud
Shoshana Arbeli-Almozlino	1986	Alignment
Ora Namir	1992	Labor
Limor Livnat	1996	Likud-Gesher-Tzomet
Dalia Itzik	1999	Yisrael Achat
Yuli Tamir	1999	Yisrael Achat
Tzipi Livni	2001	Likud
Yehudith Naot	2003	Shinui
Ruhama Avraham	2007	Kadima
Sofa Landver	2009	Yisrael Beytenu
Orit Noked	2011	Atzmaut
Yael German	2013	Yesh Atid

The Importance of the Ministries Assigned to Women

The distribution of executive portfolios is one of the most important resources available in the process of government formation in parliamentary democracies (Budge and Laver 1986; Laver and Shepsle 1990; Verzichelli 2008). In order to assess the strength of a certain party in government it is not enough to count the number of portfolios held by the party representatives; one must also examine the quality of those portfolios. Similarly, assessing the power of women in the government requires not just counting their number, but also considering the value of the portfolios assigned to them.

The importance of portfolios or ministries can, of course, vary from country to country, and from one political system to another. However, based on the work of James Druckman and Paul Warwick (2005) we

can include the ministries of foreign affairs, finance, and the interior in the highest echelon of ministries (those of the most importance). In the Israeli context, we should add the high-profile Ministry of Defense to those three. In the second echelon of ministries we can include important economic ministries (construction and housing, employment and trade, communications), large-budget ministries (education, health), and the prestigious Ministry of Justice. The third echelon contains junior and less prestigious ministries, such as those of tourism, immigration, or the environment. Finally, the lowest level contains ministers without portfolio.

When we examine the number of women who have served in the most important category of ministries, we see that in three of them no woman has ever served as minister: finance, defense, and the interior. True, the absence of women from the Ministry of Defense might be considered "natural," but their absence from the finance and interior ministries is surprising. Among the four top portfolios, the only one ever held by a woman is that of foreign affairs: Golda Meir during the years 1956–1966, and Tzipi Livni during 2006–2009.

In the second-most important category of ministries, the presence of women has been greatest in the Ministry of Education, a field which is often perceived as feminine. Three women have served as education minister: Shulamit Aloni (1992–1993), Limor Livnat (2001–2006), and Yuli Tamir (2006–2009). Also within this category, women have served as ministers of health (Arbeli-Almozlino, German), justice (Livni), and communications (Aloni, Livnat, Itzik).

A number of women have served as ministers in the third category: three in the Ministry of Environment, three in the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, two in the Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs, and a few more in other junior ministries. Four women have served as ministers without portfolios (see Table 3). This analysis suggests that even when women are appointed to serve in the government, it is rare that they are given high-profile, important ministries. Usually they are assigned to less important, lower-profile ministries.

Table 3: The Career Paths of Women in Governmental Ministries, 1949–2013

	1st position	2nd position	3rd position	4th position	5th position
Golda Meir	1949–1956 Labor	1956–1966 Foreign Affairs	1969–1974 Prime Minister		
Shulamit Aloni	1974 Minister without Portfolio	1992–1993 Education and Culture	1993 Communications Science	1993–1995 Communications	1995–1996 Communications Science and Art
Sarah Doron	1986–1988 Minister without Portfolio				
Shoshana Arbeli-Almozlino	1986–1988 Health				
Ora Namir	1992 Environment	1993–1996 Labor and Welfare			
Limor Livnat	1996–1999 Communications	2001–2003 Education	2003–2006 Education, Culture and Sports	2009– Culture and Sports	

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	1st position	2nd position	3rd position	4th position	5th position
Dalia Itzik	1999–2001 Environment	2001–2002 Commerce and Industry	2005 Communications		
Yuli Tamir	1999–2001 Immigration	2006–2009 Education			
Tzipi Livni	2001 Regional Cooperation	2001–2003* Agriculture	2003**–2006 Immigration	2006–2009 Foreign Affairs	2013 Law
Yehudith Naot	2003–2004 Environment				
Ruhama Avraham	2007–2008 Minister without Portfolio	2008–2009 Tourism			
Sofa Landver	2009– Immigration				
Orit Noked	2011–2013 Agriculture				
Yael German	2013– Health				

* Livni was first appointed as a Minister without Portfolio, and only after a year was promoted to the role of Minister of Agriculture.

** Livni also held (for some of this period) the portfolios of Housing and Justice.

The Number of Women in Each Government

The second parameter that reinforces the impression of poor representation of women in Israeli governments is the number of women serving in the government at a given time. Netanyahu's third government, for example, included four women ministers out of 22 on the day it was sworn in. That is, women formed 18% of all ministers, a rather low percentage, and yet this is a record in terms of the representation of women in Israeli government. Never have there been more than four women ministers in any Israeli government. As mentioned, from 1949 to 1966 there was a single female minister— Golda Meir. Meir was not appointed as minister after the Sixth Knesset elections, and therefore Levi Eshkol's government, which was sworn in in 1966, did not include a single woman. This state of affairs continued until Meir was appointed prime minister, following Eshkol's retirement in 1969, but even then she was the only woman in the government. In 1974, coinciding with Meir's retirement, Shulamit Aloni, the leader of the Ratz party, was appointed as a Minister without Portfolio in the first Rabin government; however, she withdrew from the government a few months later, leaving it, once again, with no female representation. Women's absence from the government continued after the political turnover of 1977 up until 1983, when Menachem Begin appointed Sarah Doron as a Minister without Portfolio. This ended a period of nine consecutive years during which the cabinet contained not a single woman.

Strangely enough, the unity government which was established in 1984, and was—with 25 ministers—the largest government ever formed up to that point, also did not include a single woman in its cabinet. Only in 1986 did Shoshana Arbeli-Almozlino join the government, but in 1988 the government was left again without any female representation. The 1992 turnover then created a precedent: the second Rabin government included, for the first time, two female ministers:

Shulamit Aloni and Ora Namir. This was surpassed by the first Sharon government, which was sworn in in March 2001, and contained three women: Dalia Itzik, Limor Livnat, and Tzipi Livni. Since this was a very large government (which included at its peak 30 ministers), the relative proportion of women among all the ministers was still only 10%. As mentioned above, as of April 2013 there are four women in the government, comprising 18% of its ministers.

International Comparison of the Proportion of Women in Israeli Governments

An international comparison of the proportion of women in government awards Israel a rather low rank. The annual report of the Gender Gap Index, published by the World Economic Forum, examines, among other data, the presence of women in government. In its most recent report, Israel was ranked 95th out of 133 countries (World Economic Forum 2012, 56). If we limit the comparison to OECD countries only (see Figure 1), we find that Israel is ranked 29th out of 34 countries.

This situation is particularly bleak in light of the global trend of an increasing female presence in cabinets and in leadership roles. Finland, for example, was ruled from 2007 to 2011 by a government with an overwhelming majority of female ministers—eight out of 12 ministers were women. Spain also had a government with a majority of women between the years 2008–2011 (nine out of 17). Currently the governments of Sweden and Norway have a female majority, while the governments of Finland and Iceland are evenly balanced in terms of their gender composition. The government appointed by the French President Francois Hollande in the summer of 2012 also contains an equal number of men and women (this figure is not reflected in Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Percentage of Women among Ministers in 34 OECD Countries
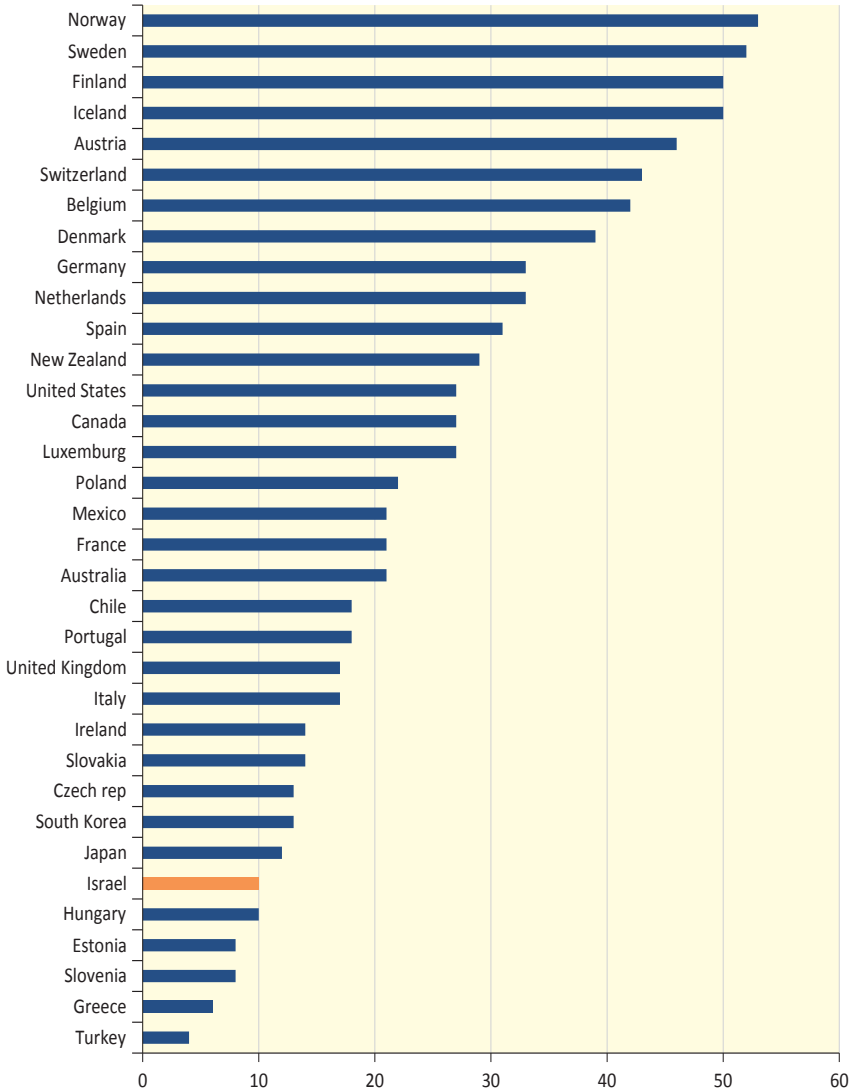
Source: Authors' calculations, based on World Economic Forum 2012.

Moreover, in many democracies the proportion of women in the government exceeds their proportion in the parliament. The reason for this is that it is usually either the prime minister who appoints the members of the cabinet, or, in the case of coalition governments, the leaders of the political parties. In this context, it is easier for these single-person selectorates to select a more gender-balanced team. In recent years we have seen many cases in which a prime minister has attached great importance to creating a gender-balanced cabinet, often compensating for the under-representation of women in parliament. In the United States, for example, the proportion of women in the cabinet is close to one-third, compared with 17% in the House and Senate. The situation in Israel, as we shall see in the next section, diverges from this pattern, and the percentage of women in government is lower than their percentage in the Knesset (which itself is not particularly high).

Women in Parliament

As of April 2013, 27 women serve in the Knesset. This is the largest number of women to serve in Israel's parliament since the establishment of the State of Israel, reflecting the trend of growing female representation in the Knesset evident over the last decade (see Figure 2 below). The story of female representation in the Israeli parliament can be divided into three chapters. In the first decade, which included the first three Knesset terms (1949–1959), the proportion of women among Knesset members was around 10% Then, from 1959 until 1999, there was an overall decline in the number of women in the Knesset, ranging from a low of seven (1988) to a peak of 11 (1992). Finally, over the five most recent Knesset terms there has been a substantial increase in the number of female Knesset members, with the figure having grown four-fold within 25 years.

This increase in itself is very prominent and important, but in order to give it substance beyond mere numbers, we must examine it from

other angles as well. Firstly, we should ask: Has the improvement in the representation of women occurred in parallel with similar improvements in the representation of other social groups? Did this improvement take place in all parties at the same time, or did certain parties lead the way before influencing other parties? Is it the case that the improvement in women's representation is even greater in parties holding more modern world views than in those holding more traditional world views?

Secondly, we must examine the improvement from a comparative perspective as well: is the increase in female parliamentary representation in Israel part of a worldwide phenomenon? Is the rate of improvement in Israel slower than that in other countries?

Figure 2: Number of Female Members of Knesset
(on date Knesset was convened)
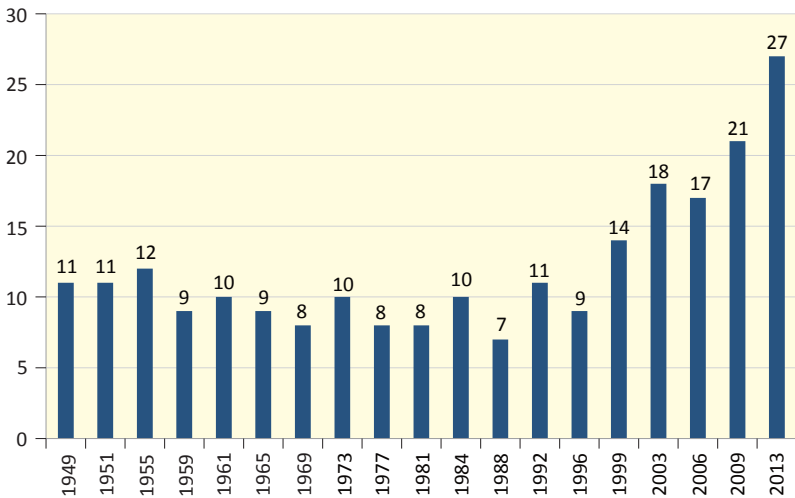
Female Representation Compared to Representation of other Social Sectors

Israeli society contains multiple social divides, with the major ones being the national divide (between Jews and Arabs), the religious

divide (between secular Jews and religious and ultra-Orthodox Jews), and the ethnic divide (between Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardi Jews). To these must be added the gender divide, between women and men. It is well known that in the early days of the state the political scene was composed mainly of secular Ashkenazi Jewish men. Over the years the dominance of this group has eroded, leading to great improvements in the parliamentary representation of Sephardi Jews, religious and ultra-Orthodox Jews, and Arabs. The improvement in the representation of these groups has been so significant that today their parliamentary representation closely reflects their proportion in the population (Brichta 2001).

Sephardi Jews, for example, formed less than 10% of MKs in the first decade, but by 1984 had grown to 30% of the Knesset, and since then continue to hold approximately one-third of the seats in the house. The representation of Arabs in the Knesset also improved, from a range between 2.5% to 6.7% up to 1992, to roughly 10% from 1992 onwards. Even the representation of religious and ultra-Orthodox Jewish Knesset members has improved over the years. In all these cases—Arabs, Sephardi Jews, and religious Jews—there is a clear pattern of a gradual increase in their representation. The representation of women, however, is a different story (Rahat and Itzkovitch-Malka 2012).

As seen in Figure 2, the changes in women's representation in the Knesset have followed a different path: rather high levels of female representation (even compared to other democracies at the time) in the first decade, then a decline, followed by a significant increase from 1999 onwards. Some attribute the decline in female representation in the years 1959–1996 to the corresponding increase in the representation of other social groups. In other words, the increase in the political representation of Arabs, and especially the increase in the political representation of the ultra-Orthodox, who do not place women in their candidate lists, was deleterious to the representation of women (Rahat and Itzkovitch-Malka 2012).

Female Representation According to Political Grouping

One of the deepest divisions in Israeli society is that between modern or progressive groups and conservative or traditional ones. Among other issues, these communities differ from one another on the question of women and their participation in the public sphere. This division is also reflected in the political system, creating a parliament that contains parties that refrain from placing women on their candidate lists, alongside other parties in which the presence of women in the parliamentary political arena is natural and expected. That is, while some Israeli parties exclude women from the political arena, others see the participation of women in the same arena as an important democratic principle. Although there is a certain correlation between conservatism and religiosity, this correlation is not perfect: in the National Religious Party (NRP), for example, women have served as members of Knesset. Therefore we have chosen not to use a distinction between religious and secular parties, but rather to refer to the differences between traditional-conservative parties and modern-progressive parties.

This grouping is based on a simple operationalization: parties that do not place women on their lists of candidates are assigned to the first category, while parties that do place women on their lists are assigned to the second category. The first group therefore includes: Shas, United Torah Judaism (UTJ), Ichud Leumi (in 2009), Ra'am (United Arab List), Balad (in 1999), Mada (Arab Democratic Party), Agudat Israel, Degel HaTorah, Poalei Agudat Yisrael, Kach, Tami, the Sephardim and Oriental Communities list, the Religious Torah Front, the Yemenite Association of Israel, and the minority lists associated with Mapai. Examining the representation of women in the Knesset using this prism reveals two interesting findings. First, since 1996 there has been an increase in the parliamentary power of the parties that exclude women, compared to prior periods. This phenomenon, which is most evident in the strengthening of the religious parties (Shas and United Torah

Judaism) and in the emergence of the United Arab List on the party map, shrinks the pool of seats available for women. The second finding is that, despite this decrease in the number of seats available for women, there has been a marked increase in their political representation.

Based on this, we can deduce that the increase in the representation of women among the parties which do not exclude them is even more prominent than is apparent from the overall picture. For example, after the elections to the 18th Knesset, the proportion of female legislators among modern-progressive parties was 28% (27 out of 98 seats won by modern or progressive parties). Moreover, the high levels of female representation as were recently recorded in Kadima (nine women out of 28 after the 2009 elections), Yisrael Beytenu (five women out of 15 after the 2009 elections), or Yesh Atid (eight women out of 19 after the 2013 elections), have never previously been seen in the history of the Knesset.

Another way to segment the representation of women in the Knesset is by examining the extent to which the degree of female representation is a factor of party ideology. That is, is there a difference between the political representation of women on the left and that on the right? The research literature shows that the representation of women tends to be higher in parties with a socialist or social democratic tradition, or in post-materialist parties (such as the Green Party). In contrast, their representation tends to be particularly low in extreme right parties (Reynolds 1999; Caul Kittilson 2011).

The political affiliations of the women elected to the 19th Knesset shows that this trend does not hold true in today's Israel (see Figure 3). Only eight out of 27 women who entered the Knesset after the 2013 elections were affiliated with left-wing parties, while ten belonged to right-wing parties, and nine to center parties. However, it is important to note that this pattern is accurate only for the last four elections, held between 2003 and 2013. Previously, most female MKs did indeed belong to left-wing parties; moreover, up to 1996, even when the right

held most of the seats in the Knesset, it never had more than three female MKs serving simultaneously. Thus historically, left-wing parties were mainly responsible for the representation of women in the Knesset, and only since 2003 has this changed. This shift can be explained by the growing number of female MKs in right-wing parties (Likud and Yisrael Beytenu), as well as by the significant decline of left-wing parties.

Figure 3: Female MKs by Political Grouping
(Right-Center-Left)
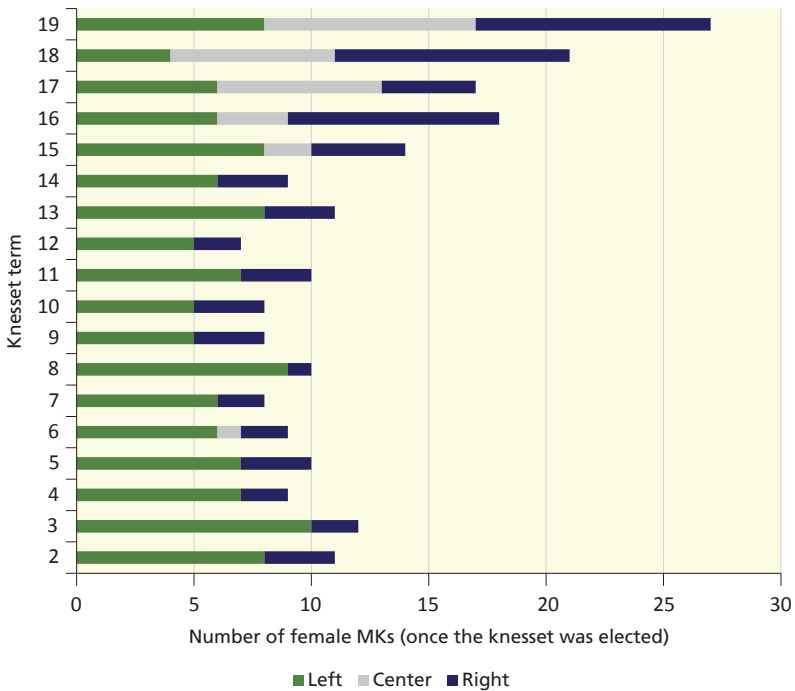
Note: The right-wing parties include Herut, General Zionists, NRP, Liberal Party of Israel, Herut-Liberal Bloc, Likud, Tehiya, Tzomet, Yisrael Ba'aliyah, Yisrael Beytenu, and Jewish Home. The center parties include Rafi, Shinui, the Center Party, Gil, Kadima, Hatnua, and Yesh Atid. The left-wing parties include Mapai, Mapam, Maki (Israeli Communist Party), Achdut Ha'avoda, Alignment, Ratz, Hadash, Labor, Meretz, Am Echad, and Balad (for details see Appendix B).

Israel in a Comparative International Perspective

Where is Israel located comparatively in terms of the representation of women in parliament worldwide? As of April 2013, it lies in 65th place, that is, 64 countries have a higher proportion of women in their parliaments. This puts Israel far below countries such as Cuba, Nicaragua, Mozambique, and Nepal, but interestingly alongside Britain, and above more than a few established democracies such as the United States, Japan, and Ireland (IPU 2013). If we narrow the field to examine only OECD countries, then Israel is then ranked 21st out of 34 countries (Table 4).

Table 4: Representation of Women in Parliament in OECD Countries (as of April 2013)

Rank	Country	Proportion of Women in Parliament (%)
1	Sweden	44.7
2	Finland	42.5
3	Iceland	39.7
4	Norway	39.6
5	Denmark	39.1
6	Netherlands	38.7
7	Belgium	38.0
8	Mexico	36.8
9	Spain	36.0
10	Germany	32.9
11	New Zealand	32.2
-	Slovenia	32.2
13	Switzerland	29.0
14	Portugal	28.7
15	Italy	28.4
16	Austria	27.9
17	France	26.9

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Rank	Country	Proportion of Women in Parliament (%)
18	Australia	24.7
-	Canada	24.7
20	Poland	23.7
21	United Kingdom	22.5
-	Israel	22.5
23	Czech Republic	22.0
24	Luxemburg	21.7
25	Greece	21.0
26	Estonia	20.8
27	Slovakia	18.7
28	United States	17.8
29	South Korea	15.7
30	Ireland	15.1
31	Chile	14.2
-	Turkey	14.2
33	Hungary	8.8
34	Japan	7.9

Note: In the group of countries marked in dark gray the representation of women exceeds one third of all members of the house; in the group below are countries in which the representation of women exceeds one quarter of all members of the house; in the next group are countries in which female representation exceeds one-fifth of the members of the house; and in the last group, with a white background, the representation of women is lower than one-fifth of the house.

Note: In a bicameral legislature, refers to the percentage of women in the lower house only.

Source: Authors' calculations based on IPU 2013.

Improvement in the representation of women elected to parliament is not unique to Israel. At the end of 1997, only 13 countries were able to take pride in the fact that at least a quarter of their members of parliament were women. By April 2013, this number had grown to 49 countries. This improvement was achieved partially due to sociocultural changes, but also, as we shall see in Chapter Four, due to the adoption of gender quotas. This was the case in France, where the percentage of women in parliament jumped from 10.9% after the 1997 elections to 26.9% after the 2012 elections, as well as in Belgium, where the increase was even greater—from 12% in the 1995 elections to 38% after the elections of 2010.

The trend of improving representation of women in parliament is also reflected in Figure 4, which shows the average percentage over time of women in parliament in 34 OECD countries. As can be seen, the proportion of women in parliament increased almost linearly, from an average of 17.4% in 1997 to an average of 25.2% in 2011. Another finding which is evident from this figure is that Israel has closed the gap to the OECD average of women's representation from around 10 percentage points (1997) to only 6 percentage points (2011). This is reflected in an improvement in the overall ranking of Israel among OECD countries over time. In 1998 Israel was ranked 30th among OECD countries, with only Greece, Japan, and Turkey below it; today it is 21st. In other words, within 15 years Israel has "overtaken" nine countries.

Figure 4:   Percentage of Women among all Members
of Parliament, Israel vs. OECD Average
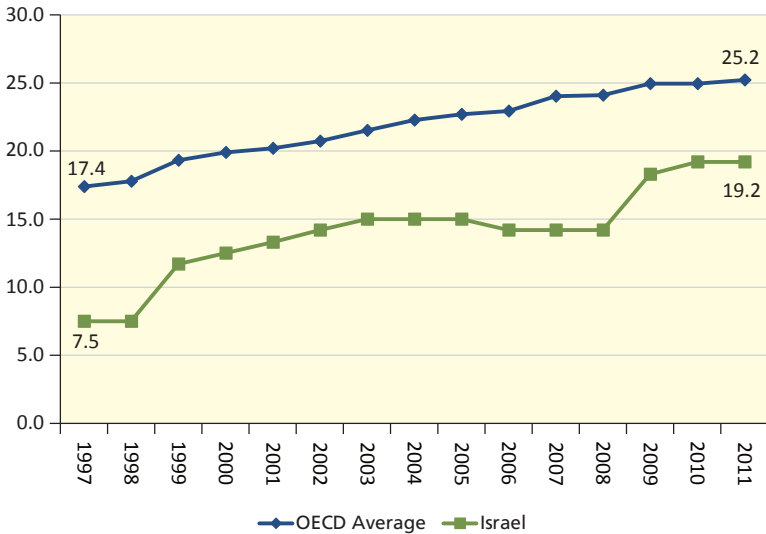
Source: Authors' calculations according to IPU 2013.

In conclusion, it can be said that since 1999 there has been a marked
increase in female representation in the Knesset. However, the
percentage of women among Knesset members, even at its current peak,
is still relatively low. Israel is ranked 65th in the world and 21st among
OECD countries in terms of the representation of women in parliament.
This grim picture is complemented by the low representation of women
in the Israeli government. In this arena the representation of women is
even lower than their representation in the parliament, placing Israel
far behind many established democracies, and in contrast to the global
trend of an increasing presence of women in the cabinet.

2. Factors Affecting the Representation of Women in Parliament

The representation of women in parliament is affected by many factors. The division we propose (illustrated in Table 5) distinguishes between sociocultural, national-institutional, party-institutional, and "other" factors.

Table 5: Factors Affecting the Representation of Women

Sociocultural	Institutional (National)	Institutional (Party)	Other
Political culture	Personal-list electoral systems	Institutionalized candidate selection	Welfare state
Religion	District magnitude	Inclusiveness of the selectorate	Regime ideology
Education and participation in the labor market	PR or plurality electoral systems	Centralization-decentralization	Corruption
	Parliament size	Ideology	Time element
	Legislated gender quotas	Female party activists	Voter preference
		Women in party leadership	
		Links with civil society	
		Voluntary party gender quotas	

Sociocultural Factors

A. Political Culture

This factor refers to citizens' attitudes to the desirability of women actively participating in public political life. These attitudes are part of a broader perception regarding gender roles. In patriarchal societies, it is commonly held that there should be a sharp distinction between the roles of women and those of men, based on gender characteristics: women are to be primarily responsible for the home and family matters, occupations that are considered to match feminine traits; while men are responsible for financial affairs and public roles, including politics—occupations which supposedly match masculine traits. In egalitarian societies, on the other hand, this separation does not exist (or is latent), and it is well accepted that women are equally deserving of engaging in politics and serving in parliament (Inglehart and Norris 2003).

Political culture affects political behavior. In societies with an egalitarian political culture, women are expected to run for parliament in a similar proportion to that of men, or at least in higher proportions than in patriarchal societies (Lawless and Fox 2010). Women in these societies will also receive greater support from elites that may help them get elected to parliament: for example, political elites may elicit the support of voters; economic elites may help raise the necessary resources for the campaign; and media elites may increase the positive media exposure of the candidate (Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Caul Kittilson 2006). Despite the centrality of the cultural explanation (Wängnerud 2009, 56), some scholars doubt its validity, and claim that the patriarchal perception, which identifies politics as a masculine arena, is in fact prevalent in most societies, even in those that are perceived as relatively egalitarian.

B. Religion

The representation of women is relatively high in Christian societies, while in Muslim societies it is particularly low (Reynolds 1999). Within Christian societies, women's representation is particularly high in Protestant societies (McAllister and Studler 2002) and low in Orthodox ones (Reynolds 1999). The explanation for this variance stems from the connection between religion and political culture. Different religions are often characterized by their different attitudes to the place of women in politics. However, it appears that in at least some instances, the relationship between religion and the representation of women is more complex. For example, the assertion that the low representation of women in Muslim countries is due to Islamic religious beliefs is problematic. Islam is interpreted and enacted differently in different countries, at least in terms of women and their status in society. In Middle Eastern countries (mostly Arab, but also in Iran and Turkey), for example, it is indeed commonly held that women should not be part of the public arena, and hence their political representation is very low. Elsewhere, however, in Muslim countries such as Kyrgyzstan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Kosovo, women have served as prime minister and as president in recent years (see Table 1 above). It therefore appears that the effect of religion is less pronounced than other characteristics that distinguish between different Muslim countries.

C. Education and Participation in the Labor Market

The more women participate in the labor market, the more they are employed in jobs with higher status, and the more educated they are, the more likely it is for them to compete for a seat in parliament and gain greater political representation. According to one explanation, women who work outside the home do not have to spend most of their time doing household chores and taking care of children, so they have the availability and the time to run for office (Rosenbluth, Salmond, and

Thies 2006).[8] A complementary explanation holds that women who are educated and financially independent are likely to feel more confident in their ability to succeed in politics, and therefore more likely to run for parliament. Furthermore, women's education, their economic resources, the social status they acquire in the labor market or in academia, and their relations with society's elites all help them to be more successful in their efforts to win a seat in parliament (Shvedova 1998). Another explanation stems from the fact that women are employed at higher rates in the public sector. This causes them to develop specific interests, aimed particularly at strengthening the public sector, which they seek to promote by standing for parliament (Rosenbluth, Salmond, and Thies 2006). Although education and participation in the labor market are key factors influencing the proportion of women in parliament, some empirical studies have cast doubt on the real influence of these factors, or have claimed that improving women's representation in parliaments is not contingent upon them (Moore and Shackman 1996; Matland 1998).

National Institutional Factors

Scholars who focus on institutional factors affecting the representation of women, at the national or the party level, make two basic assumptions. According to the first, due to sociocultural factors women have fewer resources at their disposal for running for office than men do. Thus when a female candidate competes against a male candidate—in what is called a zero-sum game—the man will usually get the upper hand. This, to a great extent, is why women are usually pushed down to the bottom of the party list in the process of candidate selection, and why their representation in the party leadership (or in

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8   According to a different view, many women who participate in the labor market continue to carry the main responsibility for the home and family matters, so that practically they are unable to run for parliament (Diaz, 2005).

safe districts/positions) is particularly low. The second assumption is that most parties have an interest in not being perceived by the public as unrepresentative, compared to other parties, as they are afraid that this will hurt them during elections. Parties are also exposed to pressures from women's groups, from within the party and without.

A. Electoral Systems: Individual Candidates versus Party List

Electoral systems based on party lists are more favorable for the representation of women in parliament than those which are candidate-centered. In candidate-centered electoral systems the candidates depend, at least to some extent, on their ability to privately raise voter support. To this end, the candidate needs various resources: financial and organizational backing, media exposure, relationships with interest groups, connections with political elites that can channel the support of the voters, and so on. As already mentioned, the basic premise is that men have greater access to such resources, and therefore electoral systems based on individual candidates make it more difficult for women to be elected (Lawless and Fox 2010). In electoral systems based on party lists, the party is perceived as responsible for the composition of the list of candidates. Hence in these systems there is greater pressure on the party to present a more representative list, not least so that it is seen by voters to be doing so, and thus will be less exposed to criticism (Matland 1998; Jalalzai and Krook 2010).

B. Constituency Size

Large electoral districts contribute to a greater representation of women in parliament. The built-in advantage of male candidates over female candidates is expressed more clearly in single-member districts, where there is usually a one-on-one battle and only one winner, and will decrease as the number of candidates per district grows (Norris 1996a; Wängnerud 2009; Jalalzai and Krook 2010; Lawless and Fox 2010).

The challenge women face in single-member districts is twofold: first, they have to win the only party nomination for the district; and then they have to win the general election in that district. In both cases, their chances of winning, as explained above, are lower than men's. Conversely, large districts—where several candidates are selected from each party—allow women to run on more favorable and competitive terms (Matland and Taylor 1997; Matland 1998).

C. Proportional Representation versus Plurality or Majority Electoral Systems

The argument that proportional representation (PR) electoral systems contribute to the representation of women in parliament compared to plurality or majority electoral systems is one of the most common found in the research literature (Matland 1998; Diaz 2005; Wängnerud 2009; Jalalzai and Krook 2010; Lawless and Fox 2010; Caul Kittilson 2011). The most accepted explanation for this is that large electoral districts, which contribute to the representation of women in parliament (as explained above), are found in proportional electoral systems; while plurality or majority systems rely on single-member districts, which reduce the representation of women in parliament.

Another reason is the phenomenon of contagion. This occurs when one party, often a small left-wing party (Matland and Studler 1996), increases the representation of women among its members of parliament, and highlights this increase (and the issue of women's representation in parliament in general) during the election campaign. Consequently, parties that do not want to be perceived as unrepresentative by the voters (by comparison) follow that party's lead, and increase the representation of women among their candidates (Wängnerud 2009). This contagion phenomenon is more common under PR electoral systems than under plurality or majority ones (Matland and Studler, 1996). The reason for this is two-fold. Firstly, proportional electoral formulae encourage a multi-

party system, in which it is more likely to find a party that will adopt the representation of women as one of its key platform items (Wängnerud 2009). Secondly, because the price of the contagion effect is lower under proportional systems, parties can place women as candidates on their lists without this coming at the expense of male candidates.

Note, however, that a particularly low electoral threshold—which increases the proportionality of the system—is expected to harm the representation of women in parliament, because it will raise the number of small parties that are elected to parliament. Given the fact that women are usually placed in relatively low positions on party lists, the percentage of women who will serve in parliament on behalf of these parties is likely to be particularly low (Matland 1998).

D. Parliament Size

Following the argument that women are usually pushed down the party lists, it is expected that in larger parliaments the proportion of women will be higher. The more seats the party has, the more women are expected to serve in parliament on its behalf. Examining Tables 19 and 20 (in the concluding chapter) illustrates this claim: had the Knesset comprised 180 seats, the proportion of women elected in the 2006 and 2009 elections would have been increased by 2.5 percentage points and 1.4 percentage points respectively.

E. Legislated Gender Quotas

We will expand on the issue of gender quotas in the following chapters. At this point it is sufficient to note that there are two types of quotas: legislated quotas, which are mandated by state legislation or by the constitution; and voluntary party quotas, which parties impose on themselves at their own initiative. Legislated quotas can be those that require parties to present women as a certain percentage of their candidates, or to place women in certain positions on their lists (or

which reward parties that do so). In some places, these kind of quotas are used to reserve seats especially for women in parliament. Using legislated quotas is expected to increase the percentage of women in parliament, at least in the short term; regarding the long term, scholarly opinion is still divided.

Party Institutional Factors

A. Institutionalization of the Candidate Selection Method

Regardless of the specific method chosen for selecting candidates, when the candidate selection method is institutionalized, that is, when clear and consistent rules are established and enforced, this contributes to increased representation of women among the party's candidates for parliament, and thus also to their representation in parliament. This is explained by the fact that when the rules governing candidate selection are not clear and consistent, candidates who are not connected to the party elite—more women than men—can have difficulty understanding the rules and acting accordingly. Additionally, in these cases party elites can bend the rules in favor of their preferred candidates (Caul 1999), which again will favor men.

B. The Inclusiveness of the Selectorate

The most exclusive selectorate comprises only one person: the party leader. More inclusive selectorates can be formed of a small party caucus, numbering only a few party representatives; a party agency, which includes hundreds or thousands of members; closed party primaries, which allow dues-paying members to select the party's candidates; or open primaries, in which the entire electorate can participate (Rahat and Hazan 2001). According to common claims, the more inclusive the selectorate, the greater the damage to women's representation in the party's candidate list for parliament. This is

because, in many cases, the party leadership seeks to present a list of candidates which is reasonably representative. Given a more exclusive selectorate, the leadership has a decisive influence on the composition of the list; on the other hand, under more inclusive candidate selection methods the party leadership loses its influence, and cannot guarantee the representation of women (Rahat 2009). In other words, the more inclusive the selectorate, the harder it becomes for the party leadership to neutralize men's given advantage in the candidate selection process.

C. Decentralized versus Centralized Candidate Selection Methods

Scholars disagree as to whether territorial decentralization of the candidate selection method—the selection of all or some of the party's candidates by regional or local party offices—contributes to the representation of women among the party's candidates for parliament or harms it. On the one hand, it is argued that women are more prominent in the local community arena than nationally, and therefore decentralizing candidate selection will improve their chances (Caul 1999). On the other, territorial decentralization is claimed to harm the representation of women among the party's candidates, because it creates small intra-party electoral constituencies—and again, small constituencies are not conducive to female representation (Rahat 2009). Another form of decentralization is functional decentralization, in which electoral districts do not represent different regions but different social groups—unions, minorities, women, and so on. Such decentralization can be regarded as setting a specific type of party gender quota, as it secures positions for women on the party's candidate list.

D. Party Ideology

Many studies have shown that the representation of women is higher in left-wing parties, especially in post-materialist parties (such as green parties), and is particularly low in extreme-right parties and religious

parties. The reason, of course, is that ideology is closely related with the party's political culture; extreme-right and religious parties uphold traditional patriarchal values, which do not encourage the participation of women in politics. Contrarily, left-wing parties adopt more equal gender attitudes (Caul 1999; Reynolds 1999; Caul Kittilson 2006; 2011).

E. Women's Activity within the Party

When women play active roles within the party, this is expected to increase their representation on its candidate list for parliament. Women can work within the party in local party branches (as members or as office holders), or establish intra-party women's organizations. Either way, there are several actions that women can take in order to contribute to women's representation among the party's candidates: they can put forward their candidacy for parliament; support other female candidates and vote for them in the nomination process; pressure the party to adopt voluntary gender quotas; or occupy senior positions in the party and its leadership (see next section) (Matland 1998; Caul 1999).

F. The Presence of Women in Senior Party Positions

As women occupy more senior positions in the party—such as party leader, party chair, spokesperson, CEO, or other bureaucratic positions—their representation among the party's candidates for parliament can be expected to grow. The reason is obvious: these party elites can be very influential in the process of selecting the party's candidates for parliament; can support women who run for the party in a general election (especially if the electoral system is candidate-based, in which case the candidate must mobilize personal support); and can promote the adoption of voluntary gender quotas by the party. Empirical studies show that women in senior party positions do indeed act in these ways (Kunovich and Paxton 2005).

G. Party Connections with Third Sector Organizations

The party's relations with third sector organizations open a new channel via which women can find a place in the party, moving from positions in these organizations to positions in the party itself. This channel, it is argued, may especially promote women, who occupy senior positions in many third sector organizations. The relationship between the party and non-profit organizations can be especially beneficial to the representation of women if the latter organizations are women's organizations, because these may support the advancement of women in the party and put pressure on the party to adopt gender quotas (Shvedova 1998).

H. Adoption of Voluntary Party Gender Quotas

This issue will be treated in greater detail later on. In short, parties can adopt quotas for women's representation, and make rules concerning the proportion of women among their candidates and their location on the list of candidates or in constituencies. In the short term, the adoption of such quotas is expected to increase the proportion of women among the party's candidates for parliament.

Other Factors

A. Welfare State

As mentioned above, the demands of childcare on women's time make it difficult for them to run for parliament. Hence it is argued that in welfare states—which provide significant support for childcare, and therefore allow women more free time – the representation of women in parliament will be relatively high (Rosenbluth, Salmond, and Thies 2006).

B. Regime Ideology

In non-democratic regimes or non-liberal democracies, those in power may heavily influence the selection of members of parliament, and so can have a decisive impact on the proportion of female representatives. The most prominent example is that of the communist bloc countries during the Cold War. In these countries the reigning ideology implied a higher representation of women in parliament, and their representation was indeed high, although women did not serve in the most senior leadership positions (Wängnerud 2009). More current examples are those of Cuba and Angola, where the proportion of women in parliament is among the highest in the world.

C. Corruption

According to some scholars, high corruption rates affect the representation of women in parliament. As corruption grows, the political ground-rules become less institutionalized and the promotion of individual politicians becomes more dependent on personal connections with influential actors—giving an advantage to men over women (Dollar, Fisman, and Gatti 1999). However, it should be noted that low corruption levels are a characteristic of successful liberal democracies, and therefore it may be that corruption is not an independent variable, but rather that it is related to other sociocultural characteristics of such democracies, such as an egalitarian political culture (Sung 2003, 718).

D. The Effect of Time

Some scholars claim that the differences in the parliamentary representation of women and men stem mainly from the fact that women's participation in political life has begun later than that of men, and that therefore these differences will diminish over time. However, this assumption does not take into account sociocultural characteristics, which even today continue to limit the representation of women in parliament (Lawless and Fox 2010, 2).

E. Voter Preferences

Another explanation put forward for the low representation of women in parliaments is a "bias" of the electorate, meaning that voters tend to prefer male candidates over female ones. However, most studies reject this argument (Black and Erikson 2003; Jalalzai and Krook 2010; Lawless and Fox 2010, 2). It should be noted that the lack of such bias does not contradict the claim that in a one-on-one race men have an advantage over women. This advantage is due to unequal initial conditions between the sexes—such as their relationships with the elites, their economic resources, and their exposure to the media—and not due to the electorate's gender bias.

In conclusion, it can be said that most of the factors that affect the representation of women in parliament are very difficult to change. However, some of them may be changed more easily, such as the institutional factors mentioned above. Many of the institutional factors that may increase the proportion of women in parliaments are already in use in Israel—a proportional closed-list electoral system with large electoral districts. In contrast, there has been very limited use of gender quotas in Israel. Accordingly, and with the aim of offering practical ways to increase the proportion of women in the Knesset, the fourth chapter will focus on this institutional mechanism. First, however, we turn to the issue of substantive representation, and the extent to which it is influenced by the presence of women in the Knesset.

Chapter Three

The Woman's Voice:
Substantive Representation of Women
in the 17th and 18th Knesset Terms

> "Descriptive representation by gender improves
> substantive representation for women in every Polity
> for which we have a measure" (Mansbridge 2005, 622)

In Chapter One we addressed the relationship between descriptive and substantive representation, and noted that study findings in this area are not clear-cut, and at times are even contradictory. In order to enhance the state of research in this area, the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has stated that there is an urgent need for case studies to determine whether the entry of women into the legislature does in fact "make a difference" in the conduct of politics.[9]

In this chapter we will examine the substantive representation of women in Israel during the 17th and 18th Knesset terms, in particular seeking to determine whether there were differences between male and female legislators in their patterns of parliamentary activity over this period. Likewise, we wish to consider whether women legislators are more preoccupied than their male counterparts with subjects classified as "feminine" or "women's issues," and if so, why? In keeping with the existing literature in this field—which is not unequivocal, but is clearly inclined in a particular direction, as we shall see below—our hypothesis

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9   As noted by Lovenduski and Karam (2002).

is that male and female legislators in Israel are distinguished from one another in the patterns of parliamentary activity that they display. In our opinion, it is evident that female parliamentarians deal more than males with subjects related to women and aimed at advancing the status of women in society.

1. Defining "Women's Issues"

In Chapter One we noted the critique of the research on substantive representation of women, and specifically the claim that "women's interests" are not the same for all women in all locales. As a result, the critics claim, it is not possible to determine a set of common concerns that fall under the rubric of women's issues and to apply them to multiple societies in a comparative study. Owing to this criticism, the definitions of these subjects in research studies tend to be somewhat vague and generalized. A number of studies characterize women's issues as being those related to the private sphere and primarily involving women, in accordance with the traditional gender division of labor (Childs and Krook 2009). Thus for example, Lovenduski (2001) defines women's issues as those that affect mainly women, whether due to biological reasons or social context. According to Carroll (1994), women's issues encompass areas that traditionally fall under the responsibility of women (such as child care or running of the home), as well as fields in which policy decisions will have a greater impact on women than on men. Hoskyns (1996) refers to "women's policy issues," that is, areas of policy that relate primarily to, or are promoted by, women, while other studies see women's issues as including policies aimed at enhancing women's autonomy and well-being. Thus for example, Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers (2007) use the label "women-friendly" for policies that address subjects related directly and exclusively to women, and which improve their standing in society (see also Wängnerud 2000; Meyer 2003; Bratton 2005). Schwindt-Bayer

(2006), for her part, defines women's issues as those on which there is a gender gap in public opinion, based on surveys.

Similarly, in studies that examine parliamentary behavior—as reflected first and foremost in legislation—the definitions of women's legislation are quite wide-ranging. Thomas (1994), for example, defines it as legislation promoting policies that support women, children, and families, while Bratton (2002) classifies it as laws whose purpose is to lessen discrimination against women or to improve their socioeconomic status. In a study by Heath, Schwindt-Bayer, and Taylor (2005), which examined female membership of parliamentary committees in South America (as opposed to legislation), the researchers employed a narrower definition. They classified as "women's committees" those dealing explicitly with women or with "sites" where there is demonstrable inequality between men and women, for example, the family or the workplace. In a different study by Schwindt-Bayer (2006), to which we will be referring below, draft bills were categorized into seven areas: women's issues, children and family issues, education, health, economy, agriculture, and fiscal affairs. The first four areas were classified as "women's issues," while the last three were labeled "non-women's issues," i.e., issues not related specifically to women. This division was based on the popular (though not uncriticized) perception whereby so-called "soft" issues, relating to the private sphere, are considered women's affairs, while "hard" issues, involving the public sphere, are viewed as non-women's affairs.

As stated, academic studies on the question of substantive representation of women have yielded different, even contradictory, results. There is reason to assume that the difficulty in defining women's issues or interests, and the fact that each scholar adopts a slightly different definition, have contributed in no small measure to this situation. Moreover, as we will demonstrate, not only do the various researchers on the subject of substantive representation of women rely on different definitions of women's issues, but they base their findings on different types of data,

which necessarily leads to a variety of results. Thus, for example, several of the studies examine perceptions and opinions of women legislators on various topics, others look at their behavior in the parliamentary space, while still others explore the discourse led by women parliamentarians. Some of the studies emphasize the differences between men and women, whereas others stress the points of similarity. There are also studies that posit that the differences between men and women are not consistent, and are dependent on institutional arrangements and on the specific social-political context. Nonetheless, despite the conceptual and methodological dissimilarities between the studies, most of them do in fact find differences between male and female parliamentarians.

In a study of male and female members of parliament in England, Norris (1996b) found that gender affects political perceptions, priorities, and the tasks that women legislators take upon themselves. Female parliamentarians tended to support more strongly those issues that related to women's rights, and to show greater involvement in subjects related to social policy. Even so, when Norris added the party affiliation of male and female legislators to the model, the gender difference shrank, although it did not disappear entirely. The implication is that it is their party—and not their gender—that causes the greatest differences between legislators. In a study of the Swedish legislature, however, Wängnerud (2000) found that despite the salience of party affiliation as a factor, gender differences still have an impact on the perceptions and behavior of legislators.

In a study conducted by Saint-Germain (1989) on gender differences between men and women in the Arizona state legislature, it emerged that female representatives tend to initiate more legislation on issues related to traditional women's interests than do male representatives. Under the category of traditional women's interests, she included all legislation on the subjects of children, abortion, education, family, health, social welfare, and sex. In addition, her study established that women legislators tend to be more active than their male counterparts

in initiating legislation on feminist issues.[10] At the same time, women legislators are generally less successful than male representatives in getting bills passed, due to the low percentage of women in most parliaments—a subject that we will be addressing below.

Additional studies in this area have found that not only are women expected to initiate more legislation than men on women's issues, but they are expected to place such legislation at the top of their parliamentary priorities (Dodson and Carroll 1991; Thomas 1994; Burrell 1997; Stewart 2001). A different study, by Schwindt-Bayer (2006), examined the ideology underlying the behavior of female legislators in three Latin American countries: Argentina, Colombia, and Costa Rica. Unlike the studies reviewed above, which presented differences between male and female legislators in both perception and behavior, Schwindt-Bayer contends that she did not anticipate finding differences between the sexes in their viewpoints and opinions. This is due to the fact that men and women today have a great deal in common, and the outright gender segregation that was once the lot of women in society has been replaced by integration between men and women in most spheres of life. On the other hand, with respect to behavior, which was tested in her study by analyzing women's legislative initiatives, she did expect to find differences between male and female legislators, since the women are "steered" by the men to engage in legislation specific to women so that the male legislators and their place in parliament will not be threatened. Schwindt-Bayer classified the bills in her study into seven categories (cited earlier), looking at the number of bills proposed by each male or female legislator on these topics. Her findings in fact indicate

10   The distinction between women's issues and feminist issues in Saint-Germain's study rests on the fact that feminist legislation aims to achieve equality between the sexes as opposed to merely promoting women's interests.

that women legislators do tend to initiate more bills on women's issues and far fewer on non-women's issues.

This study provides an interesting addendum to the empirical research on the topic of substantive representation, since it contends that the reason why female parliamentarians propose more women's legislation lies not in their different priorities or worldview, as suggested by the previous studies, but specifically in the fact that women are marginalized and "channeled" toward women's legislative issues by the male majority in parliament. Thus, the men in parliament tend to address areas that are considered more important, that is, the "male" issues, whereas the women are pushed into dealing with matters of lesser importance, considered to be "feminine" concerns.

The aforementioned study by Heath, Schwindt-Bayer, and Taylor (2005) yielded similar findings on the question of how new women representatives are installed in parliamentary committees in six Latin American countries. It was found that women are relatively excluded from the committees considered important, such as the finance or foreign affairs committees, even if there is a high percentage of women in the parliament. This holds true primarily when the party leaders or the speaker of the house are responsible for committee appointments. When a specific committee exists whose purpose is to deal with women's issues (such as the Committee on the Status of Women in Israel), a majority of the women in parliament are urged to serve on it. Thus, to the extent that institutional arrangements in a parliament permit the exclusion of women from the centers of power on the important committees, the male members of parliament exploit this and push them away from those committees and toward those that are considered to be "women-oriented." This argument supports other claims in the literature, namely, that even if differences exist between men and women legislators, and even if female parliamentarians are interested in advancing a different agenda from that of males, the present institutional arrangements generally limit their freedom of

activity and make it difficult for them to challenge the dominant agenda (Phillips 1993; Norris 1996b).

Yishai's (1997) study found that in Israel too, women are pushed onto less important parliamentary committees, which are considered to be the province of women (for example, the Education and Culture Committee, and the Labor and Welfare Committee). In the study, which examined women's participation in parliamentary committees from the First Knesset through the 13th, it was found that the percentage of women legislators serving on the committees considered "masculine" (such as the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, and the Finance Committee) was generally lower than their proportion in the Knesset, whereas in the committees considered "feminine," the percentage of women serving was more similar to their share in the Knesset.[11]

Ben-Arieh's (1999, 272) study also reinforces the perception that women legislators in Israel are often nudged toward the "feminine" sphere of activity in the Knesset. The study, which examined the activity of members of the 13th Knesset on social welfare issues, showed that gender has a significant influence on the involvement of Knesset members in this area; that is to say, women tend to be more involved than men in social welfare. Among the reasons for this, in his view, is the fact that women in parliament are steered toward women's issues. This finding is consistent with the claim in the literature that gender segregation remains unchanged, even when women leave the home and make inroads into fields that were once considered exclusively masculine (Herzog 1999).

At the same time, notwithstanding the relatively low percentage of women in the Knesset, and despite their past exclusion from the

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11   Yishai interpreted this as deliberate exclusion, but it can be argued that the reason lies also in the preferences of women legislators—a subject that we will be addressing below, in the section on membership in parliamentary committees.

committees considered to be especially important, it was found that the performance and output of women legislators in Israel are noteworthy. A study conducted by Giora Goldberg in 1982 on the performance of female Knesset members demonstrated that they were more active than their male counterparts, and sometimes even more successful in promoting their legislative efforts. It emerged from his study that women MKs submitted more bills than the men, and also managed to pass more laws, by virtue of the ad hoc coalitions they formed with women from other parties to advance women's interests.

As noted earlier, the various studies are distinguished from one another in the way that they address the topic of substantive representation. Unlike the above studies, which looked at perceptions, opinions, and parliamentary activity in the form of draft bills and committee membership, Chaney's (2006) study employed a totally different methodology, exploring the parliamentary activity of women by means of a content analysis of speeches delivered between 1999 and 2003 before the plenum of the National Assembly of Wales. The study investigated whether women tend to relate more than men to subjects that are considered women's issues or that promote equality between the sexes. The findings revealed that women are in fact more likely to address feminine or feminist issues in their speeches, and to initiate and participate more than men in debates on these topics. However, Chaney contends that we cannot generalize from the findings, and that we should not treat this group of female parliamentarians as homogeneous. Within the group, he identifies a distinct subgroup of women with a history of feminist activity in various women's organizations who are more active in these areas.

In addition to this study, which examined speeches before the plenum, there are papers on the subject of substantive representation that focus on parliamentary questions asked by male and female representatives as a means of assessing the level of substantive representation of women in parliament. One study of this type, which looked at parliamentary

questions in Norway and Finland, determined that women legislators tended to raise more parliamentary questions on subjects perceived as women's issues, such as family, health, housing, and the environment. Men, on the other hand, were inclined to submit more parliamentary questions on subjects considered men's issues, such as the labor market, the media, fiscal activity, and the like (Skard and Haavio-Mannila 1985).

Other studies exploring the perceptions and opinions of women legislators have identified considerable differences between men and women. In Flammang's (1985) study, based on in-depth interviews with a large number of women in local politics in Santa Clara County, California, she determined that women take a different approach to politics. Women conceptualize power not as strength or dominance, but as cooperation grounded in consensus and mutual respect. Other studies have determined that women's politics have a different style from men's (though they are hard-pressed to support this claim). Thus, for example, there is a widespread belief that women politicians have a tendency to be "softer," to collaborate more, and to be more ethical than their male counterparts (Witt, Paget, and Matthews 1994; Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Norris 1996b).

2. Methodology

Our study of the substantive representation of women in Israel was conducted by means of an analysis of the patterns of activity of women legislators in the 17th and 18th Knesset assemblies. To obtain as full a picture as possible, we chose to examine three key areas: legislation, committee membership, and parliamentary questions.[12] These offer

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12   To be precise, it should be noted that while legislative initiatives and parliamentary questions are in fact patterns of parliamentary activity, membership on committees does not constitute a pattern; rather, it indicates a

a comprehensive, reliable reflection of the major spheres of activity engaged in by male and female Knesset members.

Our central hypothesis was that male and female legislators are distinguished from one another in their patterns of parliamentary activity. We expected to find that women in the Knesset are more involved than men in fields whose focus is on promoting the interests of women in society and gender equality. In keeping with the categories that we employed, we would expect to find that women are engaged to a greater extent than men in areas we classified as women's domains, in particular the first two topics in Schwindt-Bayer's (2006) typology: women's issues, and children and family issues. In our opinion, the above hypotheses apply to all indicators we used to examine substantive representation: whether women submit more bills on women's domain issues compared with men; whether they succeed in passing more laws on women's domain issues than do men; whether they submit more parliamentary questions on women's domain issues than men do; and whether they tend more to be members of committees classified as "women-oriented" than their male counterparts.

So that the patterns of parliamentary activity of female Knesset members could be compared with those of male MKs, we created a control group for both Knesset assemblies consisting of male Knesset members and identical in size to that of the women's group. To make the groups of male and female legislators as similar as possible, and to minimize the effect of intervening variables, we matched each female MK with a male MK who was as similar to her as possible in terms of party affiliation, seniority, and position in the legislature (a convenience sample). For example, female MK Tzipi Hotovely (Likud), whose

position granted to a woman legislator in the parliament. Although the present study does not examine activity on the committees but only membership in them, these patterns are important in and of themselves, for reasons that we will expand on below.

first term was in the 18th Knesset and who served as chair of the Committee on the Status of Women, was matched with male MK Yariv Levin (Likud), who also served for the first time in the 18th Knesset and who chaired the House Committee. Obviously, due to various limitations, the matching was not always perfect, but we attempted to achieve maximum correspondence. On the whole, we can state that the women's study population is similar to that of the men in terms of party affiliation, seniority, and parliamentary position; and thus most of the intervening variables cited in the literature as likely to influence the parliamentary activity of legislators were mitigated a priori. The way in which the study was structured thus allowed us to assume that the primary reason for potential differences between men and women in their patterns of parliamentary activity stemmed from their gender, and not from the other variables.

The study population for the 17th Knesset was made up of men and women who entered the Knesset immediately following the April 2006 elections, whereas the population for the 18th Knesset consisted of men and women who were still serving as MKs at the time that the study was conducted (January–March 2012). Accordingly, the study population of the 17th Knesset does not include male or female MKs who joined that Knesset at some later stage, while the population of the 18th Knesset includes only those who had begun their service by the time the data was collected. It should be noted that both study populations do not include male or female MKs who served as ministers or deputy ministers at the selected point in time. This is because the study examined parliamentary activities from which cabinet ministers are prohibited (serving on committees; raising parliamentary questions; and submitting private members' bills). The list of male and female Knesset members who were included in the study can be found in Appendix A.

With respect to the time frame over which we analyzed the patterns of parliamentary activity, there was a large degree of similarity between the two assemblies. The 17th Knesset served for almost three years

(from April 2006 to February 2009); for the 18th Knesset, we examined data from the date it was elected until January–March 2012—also three years from the date of election, in February 2009. This allows for a convenient comparison between the two assemblies in terms of the volume of parliamentary activity of both the men and women who participated in the study.

We elected to employ Schwindt-Bayer's (2006) typology with a slight modification, grouping the parliamentary activity studied into eight categories: women's issues, children and family, education and culture, health, social welfare, economy, agriculture, and fiscal affairs. The first five categories were classified by us as relating to "soft" (i.e., women's) issues, while the last three are considered "hard" issues, classified as "non-women's." To these, we added the category of "other," which encompassed various subject areas not included in any of the aforementioned categories, such as security, transportation, justice, environmental issues, and so on. Since this category does not embrace typical women's issues, it too was grouped in the non-women's domain in our statistical analysis.

The use of the above typology facilitated the classification and analysis of the data, but also created a number of methodological difficulties and is open to several criticisms. It can be argued that dividing the topics into women's and non-women's domains is problematic, and even borders on chauvinism. Why, for example, do we identify education as a women's issue? Are we still caught up in the perception that women are responsible for running the home and raising and educating the children, even when they leave the private sphere, go out into the world, and succeed in getting elected to parliament? Are they expected even then to continue to be involved in the same issues that they dealt with in the home? In response to this criticism, it can be argued that the literature shows, in many cases, that this is the reality; namely, women who go into the public sphere still grapple with the issues they brought with them from the private sphere (Herzog 1999).

We chose, nevertheless, to use the above typology for several reasons. First, we see it as modular, meaning that it enabled us to shift from a more complex categorization to a simpler one. In other words, even those who do not accept the argument that education and health should be classified as women's domain issues would certainly agree that the first two categories—women's issues, and children and family—necessarily belong to this group. This is due to the fact that both of them meet several existing criteria in the literature for classifying subjects as belong to the women's domain: they are related to the private sphere and primarily affect women; they are seen as the responsibility of women to a disproportionate extent; and policy in these areas will have a greater effect on society's women than on its men. From our perspective, the use of this typology allowed us to "stand on the shoulders of giants"; since it has been deployed by other scholars in similar studies, this made it possible to compare our findings with other research on the subject in other countries.

3. Findings and Discussion

The findings will be presented in accordance with the three spheres of activity investigated. First, we will present the results in the area of legislation, encompassing both private members' bills submitted to the Knesset and private legislation that was enacted. Next, we will discuss the results of an analysis of the parliamentary questions submitted. And finally, we will analyze MKs' memberships on various Knesset committees. In each of these areas, we will relate to the findings from both the 17th and 18th Knesset assemblies and compare the two.

Legislation

The examination of legislative activity was divided into parts: First, we studied private members' bills proposed by male and female Knesset

members. Second, we looked at the laws that male and female MKs actually enacted, that is, bills that passed their third reading and were entered into *Reshumot* (the official gazette of the State of Israel). Let us reiterate that the category of legislation in this study includes only private as opposed to government bills. This is because in Israel, as in many countries, the practice is to note on the bill, at all stages of the legislative process, the name of the MK who proposed it. By contrast, in the case of a government bill, the Knesset member who steered and promoted it is not recorded, since such legislation is seen as the product of the government working as a group. The terminology used also attests to this practice: *private* legislation "belongs" to a specific member or members of Knesset, whereas in the case of *government* legislation, the bill lacks specific "owners" and belongs to the entire government. In a study of this type, which attempts to explore legislative patterns of male and female MKs as individuals, it would be misleading to consider government legislation, since it is difficult to attribute it to a specific Knesset member—all the more so when treating hundreds and thousands of laws, as we did in the present study.[13]

Private Members' Bills

The number of private members' bills submitted in Israel is very high. The figure reached 4,240 bills in the 17th Knesset, and 4,614 in the 18th Knesset.[14] For this reason, we analyzed a sample of all bills

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13   Unfortunately, in most cases, it is actually government legislation that carries far-reaching implications and greater influence than private legislation. This is because there is generally a need for the full weight of government and its built-in majority in the parliament to pass legislation with major ramifications, whether budgetary or other. For the reasons cited above, it is not possible in a study of this type to include government legislation.

14   Though for the period under discussion in our paper—from the election in February 2009 through January 2012—it reached 4,093 private members' bills.

proposed. Using a systematic random sampling method, we selected one out of every four private members' bills submitted to the Knesset by our study population. In the 17th Knesset, we sampled 242 bills out of the 977 proposed by the women MKs in our study, and 143 out of 583 submitted by the male legislators in the control group. For the 18th Knesset, we sampled 410 bills out of 1,663 private members' bills submitted by the female MKs in the study, and 402 of the 1,659 private members' bills submitted by the male legislators of the control group. Thus the overall number of bills in the study from the 17th Knesset is lower than that from the 18th.[15] In addition, the male MKs of the 17th Knesset in our sample submitted fewer bills than their female counterparts, in contrast to the virtually equal number of bills proposed by the men and women sampled in the 18th Knesset. There are several reasons for this. First, the number of women sampled in the 17th Knesset is lower than that in the 18th Knesset, and accordingly, the male control group for the 17th Knesset is smaller than that for the 18th Knesset. Hence, since the study population for the 17th Knesset is numerically unequal to that of the 18th Knesset, it is only natural that the number of bills submitted in the 17th Knesset (by both men and women) would be lower than the comparable number in the 18th Knesset. Second, in the 17th Knesset as a whole, fewer private members' bills were submitted than in the 18th Knesset's full term, in keeping with the trend over the past several decades of a noticeable rise from one Knesset to the next in the number of private members' bills submitted (Friedberg 2011).

As for the disparity between the number of bills submitted in our sample by women legislators in the 17th Knesset as opposed to men, we must admit that this gap is difficult to explain. For reasons that are not entirely clear, the male members of the control group for the

15   All statements regarding the number of private members' bills submitted during the 17th and 18th Knesset terms refer to the study population alone, and not to the Knesset as a whole, unless otherwise noted.

17th Knesset engaged in less parliamentary activity, particularly with regard to submitting private members' bills. Although we employed a convenience sample to create this control group, we did not see fit to change it even after finding the aforementioned gap, since we were constrained by other criteria used in selecting the control group, which reduced our options.[16]

Before moving on to an analysis of patterns of private legislation among male and female MKs, we feel it is important to defend our decision to examine private members' bills at the stage when they are submitted to the Knesset. Every bill that is tabled in the Knesset must pass at least three readings, with private members' bills required to surmount an additional hurdle in the form of a preliminary reading (which takes place even before the first reading). What this means in practice is that a private bill must make its way through a lengthy obstacle course before reaching the point when it is entered into the law books of the State of Israel. In fact, not only do the majority of private members' bills not become law, but they actually fall at the very first hurdle, of the preliminary reading. As a result, it can be argued that private members' bills at the stage of being tabled have no actual significance apart from declarative value (which has even earned them the derogatory label "statement bills," in part due to their negligible chances of becoming law). Private members' bills in Israel often receive media coverage, giving the MKs who propose them an opportunity to express their views on a given subject. Efforts by male and female MKs to garner media attention (newspaper headlines, TV coverage, social media) by means of draft bills can tell a great deal about how they wish to position themselves with the public. Because the act of

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16   As noted, the members of the male control group were required to match the female MKs in party affiliation, seniority, and position in the legislature. Consequently, the number of potential matches was limited, at times leaving only one possible match for a given women MK.

proposing a bill sometimes generates the only media coverage enjoyed by a Knesset member, it was important for us to see whether there is a difference between men and women in this area specifically. Within this context, we sought to test whether women are interested in positioning themselves as female legislators who look after women's interests, or whether they in fact wish to be as much like men as possible.

An additional reason why it was important to focus on private members' bills at the stage when they are tabled is that this is a very popular form of parliamentary activity in Israel, even if it has no practical meaning in reality. This is attested to by the large number of bills presented by male and females MKs, which often fill their workday. According to Knesset statistics, while MKs submitted only a few dozen bills during the first four Knesset terms, and several hundred bills in each of the fifth through 11th Knesset terms, starting with the 12th Knesset the number of private members' bills skyrocketed to several thousand per term (Blander, Nachmias, and Klein 2002).

Eighteenth Knesset

An analysis of the private members' bills submitted by female MKs and by members of the male control group during the 18th Knesset (as of January 2012) points to clear differences between men and women on the issues addressed by the bills (see Figure 5). The most noticeable difference was found in the category of "women's issues," where female MKs contributed 84% of the legislation (36 bills out of 43), while male MKs accounted for only 16%. Examples of bills included in this category are the Fair Representation of Women on Judicial Appointments Committees Law; the Retirement Age Law (amendment: Retirement Age for Women); the Authority for the Advancement of Women's Status Law (amendment: Prevention of Exclusion of Women from the Public Space); and the National Insurance Law (amendment: Change in Qualifying Period for Maternity Benefits for Female Students).

Figure 5: Private Members' Bills Submitted in 18th Knesset by Subject—
Comparison between Men and Women (as of January 2012)
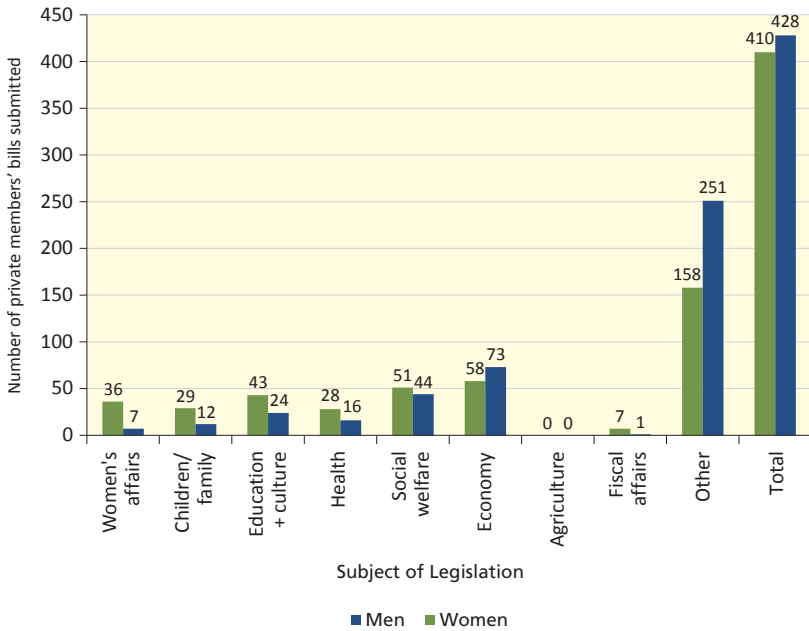
In the next three categories as well (children and family; education and culture; health), there are sizeable differences between men and women. In each of these categories, the majority of bills were proposed by female legislators. Thus for example, in the area of children and family, female members of the 18th Knesset contributed 70% of the bills (29 out of 41); in education and culture, 57% (43 out of 67); and in health, 67% (28 out of 44). In the fifth category, social welfare, the gap between men and women is smaller: female MKs submitted 51 bills on this subject (54%), while their male counterparts proposed 44 (46%).

In all five categories perceived as "feminine"—women's issues, children and family, education and culture, health, and social welfare—women accounted for a larger proportion of the bills than did men (see Table 1). Overall, the bills submitted by the women MKs in our sample

constituted 64% of all bills on women's issues in this study, as opposed to only 36% proposed by the male MKs. If we look at the areas not considered women's issues—economy, agriculture, fiscal affairs, and "other"—the picture is completely reversed: In these areas, the female study participants contributed only 41% of the total volume of proposed legislation in the study, whereas the males provided 59%. It should be noted that these differences were found to be statistically significant.

Table 6: Bills Proposed in 18th Knesset—Comparison between Men and Women

	Women	Men
Women's domain issues	64%	36%
	(187)	(103)
Non-women's domain issues	41%	59%
	(223)	(325)
Total	410	428

χ^2 = 42.95, sig. = .00

The bills submitted regarding non-women's domain issues fell mainly into the categories of economy and "other," since there were no bills submitted in the area of agriculture, and very few on fiscal affairs. Under the category of "other" were a large number of bills on the subjects of transportation, law, and security. Men proposed many more bills in this category (61% of the total), and this difference too was found to be statistically significant.

If we compare the number of bills submitted by men and women by subject, it emerges that women contributed more than men to the legislation classified as "feminine"; but if we look at the bills submitted by women as a whole, breaking them down into women's domain issues and non-women's domain issues, we find that women submitted

more bills on non-women's domain issues (223; 54%) than on women's domain issues (187; 46%). In this case, there is a similarity between men and women, in that the members of the male control group also proposed more bills on non-women's domain issues (325 bills out of 428) than on women's domain issues. Among the men, however, the gap between the proportion of bills on women's domain issues (24%) and on non-women's domain issues (76%) is much larger.

We can therefore state that when the variable being tested is the subject of legislation, women propose more bills on women's domain issues than do men, whether in terms of each feminine category individually or the women's categories as a whole. With regard to non-women's domain issues, however, the situation is reversed; that is, men propose more bills in these areas than do women. These findings are consistent with Schwindt-Bayer's (2006) study, from which we drew the subject categories, as well as Saint-Germain (1989), who demonstrated that women parliamentarians tend to initiate more bills than do male legislators on subjects related to traditional women's interests and feminist topics. In addition, we found that both men and women propose more bills on subjects classified as non-women's issues. The difference between the sexes is reflected, then, in the disparity within each gender between the number of bills submitted on women's domain issues and on non-women's domain issues. This gap is smaller among women, since they submit more bills on women's domain issues than do men.

Seventeenth Knesset

With respect to bills submitted by men and women in the 17th Knesset, we encounter a similar picture of differences between the sexes in patterns of parliamentary activity (Figure 6). An examination of the bills proposed by men and women in the category of women's issues indicates that women submitted the vast majority of bills in this area (17 bills compared to three, or 85% of the bills proposed). In the category of children and family as well, women submitted a majority of

the bills (23 as opposed to five); here too, they contributed a very high proportion of the bills (82%). With regard to education and culture, the number of bills submitted by men and women was virtually equal (17 versus 18, respectively). In the fields of social welfare and health, there was a sizeable gap between the sexes, with women submitting 74% of the social welfare bills (42 out of 57), and 64% of the bills relating to health (nine out of 14).

Figure 6: Private Members' Bills Submitted in 17th Knesset by Subject—Comparison between Men and Women
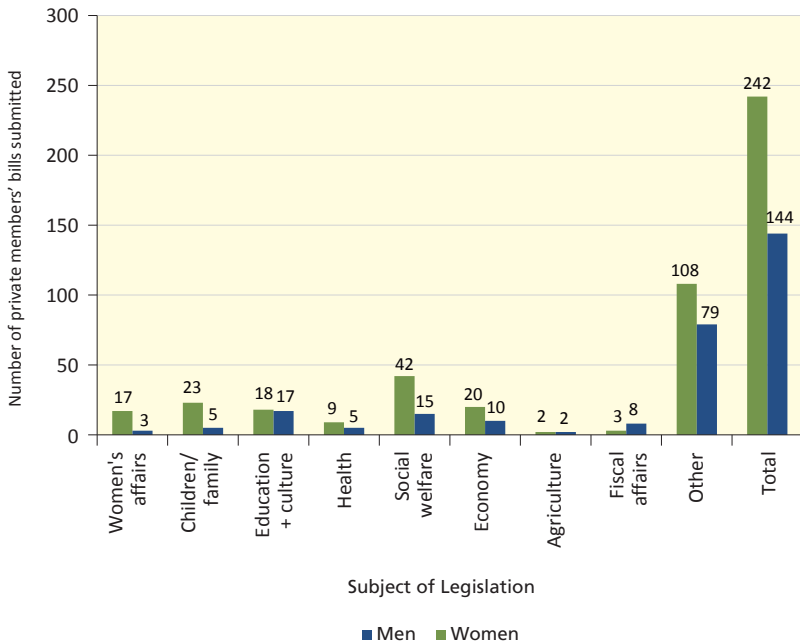
An analysis of the bills on non-women's issues produced results that ran counter to our expectations: even in those areas of legislation not considered women's domain issues, women submitted more bills in general than did men, primarily in the categories of economy and "other."

Both in areas that we classified as women's domain issues, and those labeled non-women's domain issues, women proposed more bills than did men. This apparently stemmed from the fact that the male MKs who made up the control group for the 17th Knesset were not particularly active in the parliament. The women MKs overshadowed them in the number of bills they presented in all areas. At the same time, the gaps that exist between men and women on women's domain issues (especially in the categories of women's issues and children and family) are greater than those on non-women's domain issues.

In terms of women's domain issues as a whole, we see that women submitted 109 bills (71% of the total), while the men proposed only 45 (29%) (see Table 7). As stated, even in the legislative areas not considered in the women's domain, it is evident that the women were more active: female MKs proposed 133 bills compared with the men, who submitted 99 (57% versus 43%, respectively). Nevertheless, it is clear that the gap between men and women is smaller in the case of bills on non-women's domain issues than it is on women's domain issues.

Table 7: Bill Proposed in 17th Knesset—Comparison between Men and Women

	Women	Men
Women's domain issues	71%	29%
	(109)	(45)
Non-women's domain issues	57%	43%
	(133)	(99)
Total	242	144

$\chi^2 = 7.16$, sig. = .00

Adopted Legislation

In the second section of the legislative analysis, we will examine all the private members' bills that the female MKs and the male control group succeeded in enacting during the 17th and 18th Knesset terms. The number of laws studied is, of course, much smaller than the number of bills proposed, since these are the bills that successfully passed a third reading.

Before analyzing the patterns of the legislation that was adopted, it should be noted that this legislation attests not only to the agenda of the male or female MK who proposed it, but also to the overall policy that the majority wishes to promote. Private members' bills do not pass, for the most part, unless they enjoy the explicit support of the government, or the government grants its members and those of the coalition the freedom to vote their conscience. This is especially true in the case of the stable coalition in the 18th Knesset, where the government had almost complete control over the parliamentary agenda and the legislation that passed; but it also applies in principle to other Knesset terms. Legislation that passes, however, is also a testimony to the ability of the male or female MK in question to pursue an issue by creating coalitions to secure support for a bill (Maor 2009). The fact that Knesset members work within a rigid framework of strong factional cohesion makes it difficult for lone male or female MKs to obtain the support of other Knesset members for their bill if other factions decide not to support this legislative initiative.

In a study of this type, which seeks to explore the patterns of parliamentary activity among Knesset members and to draw comparisons between men and women, we considered it important to examine private members' bills that were proposed by male and female MKs and accepted. Thus we decided to collect data regarding not only the starting point of the legislative process—bills submitted to the Knesset before they have passed a preliminary reading—but also the final stage—laws that have passed the third reading. This allowed us to obtain a fuller picture of

the patterns of activity of women MKs in terms of the issues that they are interested, and successful, in advancing. But, as stated above, it is important to bear in mind the limitations of this indicator, since the ability to pass a private bill depends on a large number of intervening factors (for example, faction discipline, or the level of government support) that do not necessarily testify to the MKs' intentions or the issues they are interested in promoting.

Eighteenth Knesset

A salient finding emerging from the data even before the breakdown into categories by subject is that, in this Knesset, men succeeded in passing more legislation than did women (see Figure 7). In the 18th Knesset, male MKs managed to pass 167 bills, whereas female MKs were able to pass only 78. It should be recalled that the number of bills submitted in this Knesset by both men and women legislators in our sample was quite similar (see Figure 5), and that the two study populations are equal in size. Moreover, the members of both groups are identical in terms of their seniority in the legislature, their party affiliation, and the position they hold in the parliament. Thus, it is possible to attribute the disparity in the quantity of legislation passed to the gender difference between the two groups.

This finding is in line with the results of Saint-Germain's (1989) study, which demonstrated that female legislators are generally less successful than men in getting bills passed. One reason for this state of affairs may be the relatively low representation of women in the legislature, which prevents them from creating broad-based women's coalitions to support their bills, in keeping with critical mass theory (as presented above). At the same time, we should be wary of drawing definitive conclusions, since we did not control for all possible explanatory variables.

Figure 7: Laws Adopted in 18th Knesset by Subject (as of January 2012)—
Comparison between Men and Women
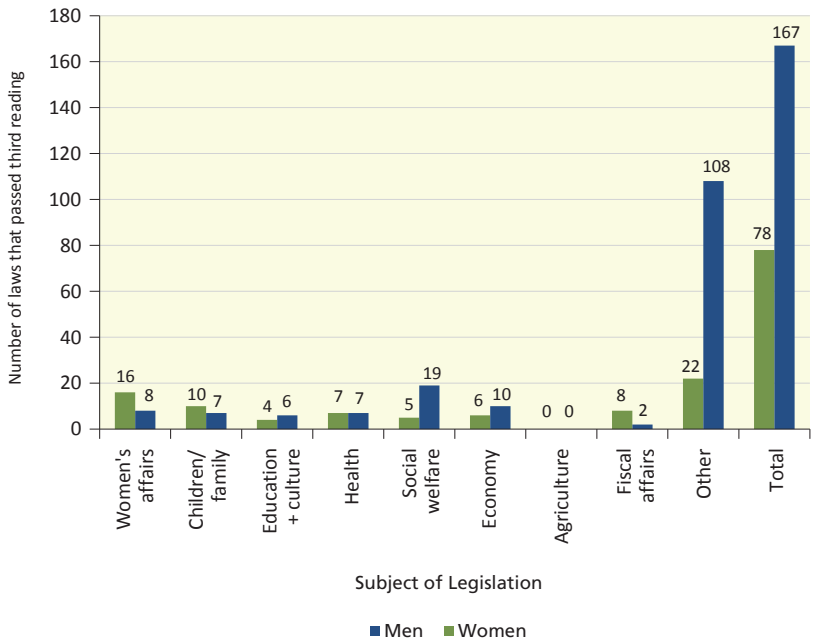
When we break down the legislation that was passed into categories
by subject, an interesting picture emerges. Similar to our above-
mentioned observations of private members' bills, an analysis of the
legislation that passed shows a considerable gap between men and
women in the categories of women's issues and children and family.
In the first category, women contributed 16 out of 24 laws (67% of all
legislation on this subject), while in the second, they accounted for 10
out of 17 laws (59%). By contrast, in the next three categories, which
also fall under the heading of women's domain issues according to
our classification, the expected differences between men and women
did not materialize. In two out of the three categories—education and
culture, and social welfare—men passed more legislation than did
women, while in the category of health, men and women were passed

the same number of bills. If we refer back to the bills proposed on the same subjects in the 18th Knesset, we see a sizeable difference in favor of the women in all three categories. However, this gap disappeared during the legislative process, with the figures actually reversing themselves, leaving the men with the upper hand.

When examining the subjects classified as non-women's domain issues, we find that in the categories of economy and "other," male MKs managed to pass more bills (10 out of 16 laws on economic issues, and 108 out of 130 in the category of "other") than did female MKs; but in the category of fiscal affairs, the women succeeded in passing more laws (8 out of 10), meaning that in this category too, the picture is mixed.

An overview of the five categories that comprise women's domain issues, and the four classified as non-women's domain issues (Table 8), shows that while the gap between men and women in legislation passed on women's domain issues was very small (only 6 percentage points), the margin for non-women's issues was quite sizeable, at 54 percentage points, in favor of the men. In other words, while it is true that female legislators succeeded in passing fewer laws than their male counterparts, the disparity was much greater for non-women's domain issues, but almost imperceptible when it came to women's domain issues. This may be indicative of the enormous effort that women legislators invest in advancing legislation on women's domain issues, thereby neutralizing the legislative advantage held by the men.

Women also succeeded in passing more legislation on women's domain issues (42 laws, representing 54% of all the legislation they passed) than they did on non-women's domain issues (36 laws, constituting 46%). By contrast, the men passed more legislation on non-women's domain issues (120 laws, comprising 72% of all laws passed by them) than they did on women's domain issues (47 laws, or 28%). It would therefore appear that the greatest gaps in the women's favor lie in the categories of women's issues and children and family issues, which are unquestionably in the women's domain. This is similar to the picture that emerged from the analysis of private members' bills.

Table 8: Laws Adopted in 18th Knesset – Comparison between
        Men and Women

	Women	Men
Women's domain issues	47%	53%
	(42)	(47)
Non-women's domain issues	23%	77%
	(36)	(120)
Total	78	167

χ^2 = 15.19, sig. = .00

Seventeenth Knesset

A look at this Knesset reveals more striking differences between male and female MKs, and conforms more closely to our expectations. In Figure 8, we can see sizeable disparities between men and women legislators in all five categories classified by us as "feminine." The most outstanding difference was found, as expected, in the category of women's issues, where 100% of the legislation enacted by the 17th Knesset (all eight laws) was passed by women legislators. Similar, though smaller, gaps can also be found in the category of children and family, where women were responsible for passing 67% of the legislation adopted (eight out of 12 laws); education, where they passed 58% (11 out of 19) of the laws ratified; and health, in which women passed 80% of the successful legislation (four out of five laws). Only in the category of social welfare was there a slight advantage to the male MKs, who passed 53% of the legislation enacted in this area (eight out of 15 laws).

As shown in Figure 8, in the 17th Knesset it was actually the women who passed more legislation, apparently due to the nature of the male control group for this Knesset, as noted earlier. We can also

see that a sizeable proportion of the women's legislative efforts are concentrated on the left side of the figure, that is, on issues associated with women. With regard to non-women's domain issues, there is parity on economic issues and an advantage for the men in the categories of fiscal affairs and "other."

An examination of all legislation passed by male and female legislators in the 17th Knesset, broken down into women's domain issues and non-women's domain issues, shows statistically significant differences between the legislative patterns of men and women. While the women contributed 64% of the legislation on women's domain issues, the men accounted for only 36%. The picture is reversed if we examine non-women's domain issues, where women were responsible for only 40% of the total legislation passed, while men contributed 60%.

Figure 8: Laws Adopted in 17th Knesset by Subject—Comparison between Men and Women
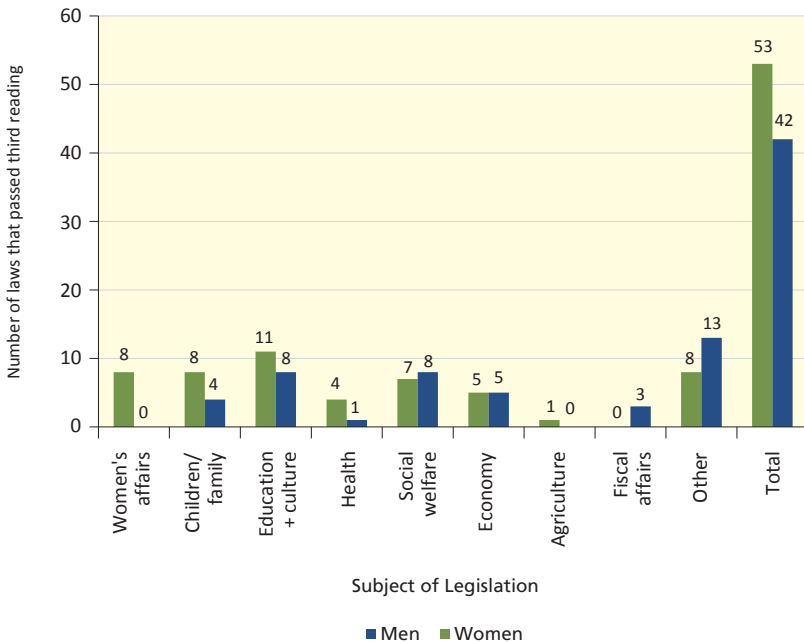
In contrast to the draft bills, where we saw that women proposed more legislation on non-women's domain issues than on women's domain issues, an analysis of the legislation that was adopted indicates that in both Knesset terms studied, women succeeded in passing more laws on women's domain issues than on non-women's domain issues. This implies that women MKs in fact submit many bills in a wide range of areas, including those not classified as "feminine"; however, the bills that they choose to pursue deal, for the most part, with women's issues. This finding supports our central thesis, since at times bills serve a declarative purpose and nothing more, and hence are less important than legislation that has actually been adopted, for which the female MK had to work hard in order to mobilize majority support.

Table 9: Laws Adopted in 17th Knesset – Comparison between Men and Women

	Women	Men
Women's domain issues	64%	36%
	(38)	(21)
Non-women's domain issues	40%	60%
	(14)	(21)
Total	52	42

$\chi^2 = 5.29$, sig. = .02

Parliamentary Questions

Parliamentary questions are a very popular monitoring mechanism in a parliamentary regime. Their uses include: requesting information from the government; applying pressure to take a certain action; demanding explanations from ministers on controversial areas of policy; attacking ministers in a difficult political situation; expressing

concern for the interests of the voters; personal publicity; and building a personal reputation on certain issues (Wiberg 1994; Cole 1999). The parliamentary question has always formed part of the Israeli system of government. Today, three types of parliamentary questions are customary in the Knesset: a regular question,[17] an urgent question,[18] and a direct question.[19] In addition, a question hour was instituted in the Knesset beginning in 1997 (Knesset Rules of Procedure 2012).[20] The mechanism of the parliamentary question suffers from numerous shortcomings[21] and low effectiveness, but it is still important in theory since it can shed light on the performance of the government, and obligate it, at least theoretically, to account for its actions. At the

17   A parliamentary question responded to by the minister or the deputy minister (or by a different minister, with the consent of the Knesset speaker) in the Knesset plenum within 21 days of its submission. The minister is entitled to decline to answer the question.

18   A parliamentary question that, in the determination of the speaker of the Knesset, has special importance or urgency. The response is presented by the minister or deputy minister (or by a different minister, with the consent of the Knesset speaker) in the Knesset plenum in the same week that it was submitted. The minister is entitled to decline to answer the question.

19   A parliamentary question for which the response is provided in writing to the MK who submitted it by the minister to whom it was directed within 21 days of its submission. The minister is entitled to decline to answer the question.

20   During the question hour, which takes place once a week at a time determined by the speaker of the Knesset, questions are directed at the prime minister or a different minister as decided upon by the speaker. Ten questions are discussed that are relayed in advance to the persons questioned. In addition, the session chair permits ten MKs who are present in the plenum to ask a question that was not delivered to the minister beforehand, on topics decided upon by the Knesset presidium.

21   Among the problems: ministers being questioned who do not adhere to the time frame set forth in the Knesset Rules of Procedure for responding to a question; MKs who ask questions but do not present themselves in the plenum to hear the response; and others (for an expanded discussion, see Yehezkel & Yinon 2009).

individual level, parliamentary questions have an important declarative value, since they allow MKs who ask them to position themselves as demanding information from the executive branch, exposing government inadequacy, and openly defending various public interests. For purposes of our analysis, we studied all the parliamentary questions submitted by female MKs and the male control group in the 17th and 18th Knesset assemblies.

Eighteenth Knesset

In the 18th Knesset, the female MKs in our sample submitted 382 parliamentary questions on assorted topics, while the male MKs in the control group submitted 505. An analysis of the subjects of these questions (Figure 9) shows clear distinctions between men and women. As expected, the most salient differences centered on the category of women's issues, in which the female MKs contributed 87% of the parliamentary questions (20 out of 23), and the category of children and family issues, in which the female MKs were responsible for 72% of the questions. Smaller differences were found in the categories of education and culture, and health, though here too, the women submitted more questions than did the men. In the category of social welfare (presumed to be an area of women's interest), the men asked more parliamentary questions than the women. And surprisingly, in categories not associated with women—economy and fiscal affairs—it was the female MKs who submitted more parliamentary questions.

An aggregate analysis of the number of parliamentary questions submitted by male and female legislators on both women's domain issues and non-women's domain issues supports our hypotheses, and conforms with the findings that emerged from the analysis of legislation (see Table 10). It was found that women submit a significantly greater number of parliamentary questions on women's domain issues than do men (161 as opposed to 120), while submitting fewer questions on non-women's domain issues (221 versus 385).

Figure 9: Parliamentary Questions Submitted in 18th Knesset by Subject (as of January 2012)—Comparison between Men and Women
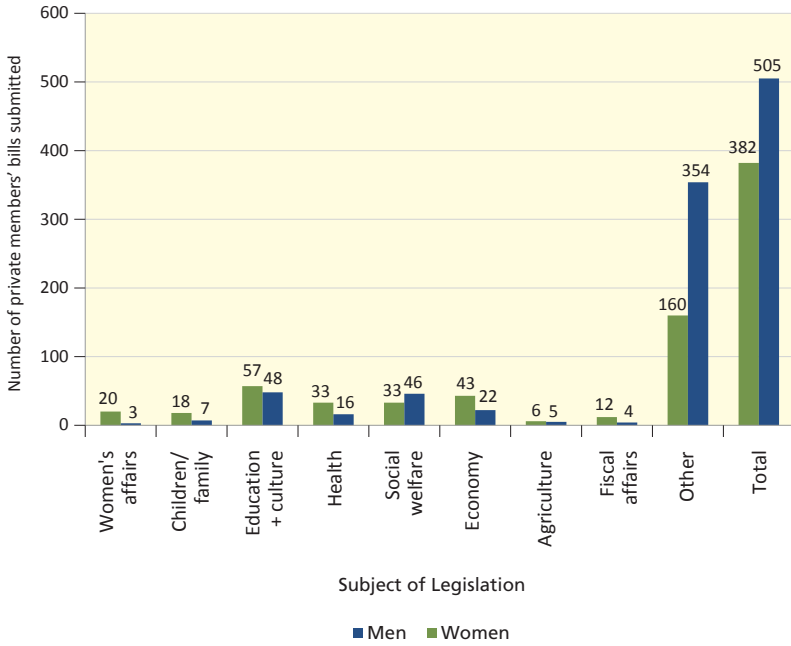
Table 10: Parliamentary Questions Submitted in 18th Knesset—Comparison between Men and Women

	Women	Men
Women's domain issues	57%	43%
	(161)	(120)
Non-women's domain issues	36%	64%
	(221)	(385)
Total	382	505

$\chi^2 = 33.96$, sig. = .00

Both men and women in the 18th Knesset submitted more parliamentary questions on non-women's domain issues than on women's domain issues: 42% of all questions submitted by female MKs dealt with the latter, whereas 58% concerned non-women's domain issues; and 24% of all questions submitted by men concerned women's domain issues, while 76% dealt with non-women's domain issues. These findings differ from those of Skard and Haavio-Mannila (1985), who found that in Norway and Finland, women tended to raise more parliamentary questions on women's domain issues than on others, while men tended to submit more parliamentary questions on topics considered "masculine." It is nonetheless important to note that the gap between the two types of issues is much greater among male MKs than among female MKs.

Seventeenth Knesset

An interesting phenomenon that stood out in this Knesset was that the women submitted more parliamentary questions than the men in all categories except two, where the rates were almost equal between men and women: women's issues, and children and family issues (Figure 10)—both categories that are considered distinctly feminine. The figures for the 17th Knesset reflect, first and foremost, the limited parliamentary activity of the men of the control group. Whereas women submitted 392 parliamentary questions, the male control group raised only 235.

Figure 10: Parliamentary Questions Submitted in 17th Knesset
                    by Subject—Comparison between Men and Women
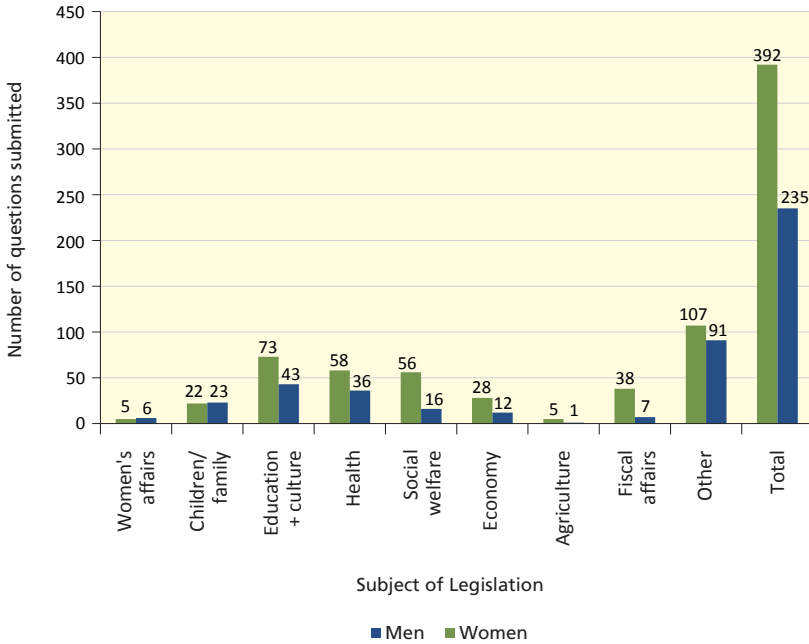
The summary of the data on parliamentary questions in the 17th Knesset (Table 11) shows a deviation from the findings collected above, which supported our hypotheses. It emerges that both men and women in this Knesset submitted more parliamentary questions on issues classified as in the women's domain than they did on non-women's domain issues. Among the men, 53% of all parliamentary questions pertained to women's domain issues, while the corresponding figure for women was 55%. This finding is consistent with the fact that the male MKs of the 17th Knesset submitted numerous parliamentary questions in the categories of women's issues and children and family issues. An examination of the absolute numbers indicates that women submitted more parliamentary questions than men on both women's domain

issues (214 versus 124) and non-women's domain issues (178 as opposed to 111). As stated, these findings attest, above all, to the limited parliamentary activity of the male control group in the 17th Knesset.

Table 11: Parliamentary Questions Submitted in 17th Knesset—
           Comparison between Men and Women

	Women	Men
Women's domain issues	55%	53%
	(214)	(124)
Non-women's domain issues	45%	47%
	(178)	(111)
Total	392	235

$\chi^2 = 0.19$, sig. = .06 (ns)

Membership on Parliamentary Committees

The final indicator that we examined is membership on the permanent Knesset committees. Let us preface this section by noting that the parliamentary committees were created to assist the plenum in carrying out its work in the most effective manner possible. This is necessary since, at the plenum level, only a general debate can be held on any given issue, making it difficult to consider it thoroughly. In practice, the parliamentary committees are the primary arena for executing two of the key functions of parliament: legislation, and oversight of the executive branch (Lees and Shaw 1979; Döring 1995).

The permanent Knesset committees derive their authority from three sources: Basic Law: The Knesset (1958); the Knesset Law (1994); and the Knesset Rules of Procedure. The membership of the committees is determined by the various factions, with each faction allocated a

number of seats on the various committees in accordance with its size, as stipulated in article 102(a) of the Knesset Rules of Procedure: "The Knesset shall determine the factional composition of the permanent committees, and shall select the members of the committees as stated in article 21(a) of Basic Law: The Knesset . . . taking into account the factional composition of the Knesset and the size of the factions, as well as the notice of the factions regarding the assignment of their members to the committees, if such notice has been submitted."

Since the decisions on assigning representatives to the various committees is made by the factions, and the public is not privy to the internal dynamics, which generally come into play behind closed doors, it is difficult to assess whether a Knesset committee appointment is made based on the MK's wishes, or is imposed on the MK by the faction. Presumably, it is a combination of the two. On the one hand, there are cases where the MK is interested in advancing initiatives in a given area, and for this reason, wishes to be a member of a committee dealing with this area. Alternatively, there are committees considered prestigious, and thus obtaining a seat on them on behalf of the faction represents a prize of sorts for the MK. On the other hand, there are cases where the faction obliges the MK to represent it on a certain committee due to a constraint or necessity. It is useful to recall that in the parliamentary situation in Israel, a considerable proportion of Knesset members, in particular those who belong to the coalition but are not members of the cabinet, serve on a large number of committees; consequently, it is reasonable to assume that in some cases the MKs chose to serve on a particular committee, while in others they followed the directives of their faction.

Whether committee membership stems from the personal desire of the MK or from a decision by the MK's faction, we believe that it holds significance in terms of patterns of parliamentary activity. Belonging to a parliamentary committee exposes MKs to issues in the committee's areas of purview, naturally encouraging them to deal with these issues. For this

reason, we saw fit to examine two indicators in the area of committee membership that relate to women and their substantive representation. The first treats the committee as the unit of analysis, and looks at the percentage of women on the various Knesset committees;[22] while the second takes as its unit of analysis the committee membership of the MKs who were the subjects of this study, examining which committees they belonged to.

Table 12 presents the first indicator, namely, the percentage of women on each of the 12 permanent committees in the 18th Knesset. As shown, some committees have a rather high percentage of women, for example the Science and Technology Committee, in which women make up half of the members, or the Immigration, Absorption, and Diaspora Affairs Committee, for which women comprise 44% of the total membership. By contrast, there are committees where the percentage of women is low to negligible. Thus, the Economic Affairs Committee does not have a single female member, while female membership of the Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee is only 7%.

We divided the permanent committees into the four categories generally accepted in the literature (Heath et al. 2005):

1. Power committees (committees that are considered important and that confer power and prestige on their members)
2. Economic and foreign affairs committees
3. Social affairs committees
4. Special committee on women's affairs

The three committees that did not fit any of these categories—the Internal Affairs and Environment Committee; the State Control

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22   The composition of the committees changes frequently; thus, in order to create this indicator, we looked at the composition of the permanent committees during the period of the present study (January 2012). For the 17th Knesset, we observed the makeup of the permanent committees at the time of the Knesset elections, and at the decisions on committee membership.

Committee; and the Science and Technology Committee—were placed in the category of "other."

The findings show that in the 18th Knesset, the so-called "power committees" have the lowest proportion of women (averaging only 10%). In second place are the committees dealing with economics and foreign affairs, where women's membership stands at 17%. Next are the social affairs committees, where the average rate of women members climbs to 33%, and the special committee on women's affairs (in Israel, the Committee on the Status of Women), where the proportion of women is also 33%. These levels of representation should be compared with the proportion of female Knesset members during the period studied, which ranged from 17% (with the entry of 20 women to the Knesset following the 2009 elections) to 20%, following several personnel changes that raised the number of women in the Knesset to a peak of 24.[23]

23   The percentage of women is based on the total number of women (including those who served as ministers or deputy ministers during the term in question, despite the fact that they cannot actually serve on committees) out of all Knesset members (120). In other words, the figure includes both male and female MKs, and some will therefore argue that the analysis is skewed. For this reason, it should be noted that a test we conducted in which we included only MKs (both men and women) who are not cabinet ministers, showed that the percentage of women who are not members of the cabinet out of all MKs who are not cabinet ministers is very similar to the overall percentage of women out of all MKs, and that the differences, if any, are not at all significant.

Table 12: Proportion of Women in Knesset Committees—18th Knesset

Category	Committee	Proportion of Women in Committee, %	Average Proportion of Women in Category, %	Overall Proportion of Women in Knesset, %
Power Committees	House	12.5 (2/16)	10.1	
	Constitution	7.7 (1/13)		
Economic and Foreign Affairs Committees	Finance	40.0 (6/15)	17.5	
	Economic Affairs	0.0 (0/12)		
	Foreign Affairs and Defense	12.5 (2/16)		
Social Affairs Committees	Immigration	44.4 (4/9)	33.1	17.5 (21/120)
	Education	25.0 (3/12)		
	Labor and Social Welfare	30.0 (3/10)		
Special Committee on Status of Women	Status of Women	33.3 (3/9)	33.3	
Other	Internal Affairs and Environment	16.7 (2/12)	34.4	
	State Control	36.4 (4/11)		
	Science and Technology	50 (4/8)		

It is clear, then, that the proportion of women on the power committees is much lower than their level of representation in the Knesset. The proportion of women who are members of the economic and foreign affairs committees is similar to their level of representation in the Knesset, while the proportion of women on the social affairs committees and the special committee on the status of women is much higher than their proportion in the Knesset. These findings are consistent with the traditional breakdown into women's domain issues and non-women's domain issues, and support the hypotheses of the present study. Furthermore, they correlate with the results of the Heath et al. study (2005), which examined women's membership of parliamentary committees in Latin America, and Yishai's (1997) study on women's membership of parliamentary committees in the First through 13th Knesset assemblies. The disparities in the proportion of women members on the different committees may result from women being "steered" by the male majority or coerced by the faction, but it is certainly possible that the reason also lies with the personal preferences and areas of interest of the female legislators. It would not be unreasonable to assume that it is a combination of the two.

An examination of the same indicator for the 17th Knesset (Table 13) yields similar patterns, with certain differences. As shown, the average percentage of women on the power committees is not as low as in the 18th Knesset, and is even much higher than the level of representation of women in this Knesset, which is 14%. The average proportion of women on the economic and foreign affairs committees is somewhat lower than their proportion in the Knesset, while the average proportion of women on the social affairs committees is much higher than their level of representation in the Knesset (resembling the 18th Knesset). The proportion of women members in the Committee on the Status of Women in the 17th Knesset is 64%, 4.5 times their representation in that Knesset.

Table 13: Proportion of Women in Knesset Committees—17th Knesset

Category	Committee	Proportion of Women in Committee, %	Average Proportion of Women in Category, %	Overall Proportion of Female MKs, %
Power Committees	House	25.0 (6/24)	23.6	
	Constitution	22.2 (4/18)		
Economic and Foreign Affairs Committees	Finance	12.0 (3/25)	10.1	
	Economic Affairs	13.3 (2/15)		
	Foreign Affairs and Defense	5.0 (1/20)		
Social Affairs Committees	Immigration	25.0 (3/12)	25.0	14 (17/120)
	Education	21.4 (3/14)		
	Labor and Social Welfare	28.6 (4/14)		
Special Committee on Status of Women	Status of Women	64.3 (9/14)	64.3	
Other	Internal Affairs and Environment	17.6 (3/17)	17.5	
	State Control	26.7 (4/15)		
	Science and Technology	8.3 (1/12)		

Unlike the first indicator, which treated the entire committee as a unit of analysis, the second indicator is a personal one, focusing on which committees each man and women surveyed in the study belonged to.[24] As noted in the Methodology section, the men and women in the study are as similar to each other as possible in terms of other variables that could play a role in assigning MKs to committees. This indicator then, is free of most of the variables that could affect membership of MKs on committees, such as seniority and party affiliation, with the exception of gender. To simplify the figures, for each male or female legislator we computed the proportion of the number of "women's domain" committees on which they served (defined for this purpose as the social affairs committees and the Committee on the Status of Women) out of all the committees on which they served, excluding the three committees belonging to the category of "other."[25] Stated otherwise, for each male or female MK included in the study we calculated the number of women's domain committees that they belonged to, and divided it by the total number of committees of which they were members, with the exception of the Internal Affairs and Environment Committee, the State Control Committee, and the Science and Technology Committee. For example, in the 18th Knesset Einat Wilf was a member of seven permanent committees: State Control; Education, Culture and Sport; Immigration, Absorption and Diaspora Affairs; Science and Technology; Foreign Affairs and Defense; Finance; and the House Committee. Since the State Control, and Science and Technology Committees were not included in the indicator, the calculation for MK Wilf is as follows:

24 To make this indicator as reliable and representative as possible, we included all male and female MKs who were members of one of the permanent Knesset committees for a period of six months or more during the 17th or 18th Knesset.

25 The Internal Affairs and Environment Committee, the State Control Committee, and the Science and Technology Committee were excluded from the calculation since their subject matter does not fit any of the four categories that we used.

$$\frac{\text{Women's domain memberships}}{\text{overall memberships}} = \frac{\text{Social affairs committee memberships + status of women}}{\text{Power + economic \& foreign + social + status of women}} = \frac{2}{5} = 40\%$$

After calculating the value of this indicator for all male and female MKs in the study, we created an average indicator for each group (men and women). The results, presented in Table 9, yielded similar findings for both Knesset assemblies. The proportion of memberships on "women's domain committees" out of total committee memberships was higher among the female MKs than among the males. Likewise, in both assemblies this percentage stood at roughly 50% among women, meaning that half the committees that they belonged to (out of all the committees on which they served) were women's domain committees. Among the men, this proportion was much lower.[26] Here too, the results should be interpreted with caution: we must ask whether the findings stem from a desire on the part of the female MKs to be more involved than the men in issues that are considered "feminine," or from the dictates of the faction, which pigeonholes women and steers them from the outset toward women's issues.

Table 14: Committee Memberships of Study Population

Knesset	Gender	Proportion of women's domain committees to all committees served on
17th	Women	49%
	Men	20%
18th	Women	52.4%
	Men	32.5%

26   However, there was progress between the 17th and 18th Knesset terms, with a gradual rise in the men's membership on women's domain committees from 20 to 32 percent.

An analysis of committee membership, using both indicators, revealed salient differences between men and women. The committees considered "feminine" (which deal with "soft" issues) comprise a higher percentage of women, while the committees that are not feminine (and which are generally perceived as more important and prestigious) contain a higher percentage of men. And among the women, the proportion of feminine committees on which they serve to the total number of committees to which they belong, is much higher than the corresponding percentage among men—further proof that women choose, or are channeled to, involvement in women's domain issues as part of their patterns of parliamentary activity.

4. Conclusion

To summarize this part of our research we can say that, in the vast majority of cases, our hypotheses were substantiated. Female Knesset members are in fact more involved in women's domain issues than are male MKs, and this is true for all the parameters of activity that we studied: legislation, parliamentary questions, and committee membership. It should be noted that during the execution of the study, we controlled for various intervening variables including seniority, position in the legislature, and party affiliation. The fact that the gender differences remained sizeable despite these controls indicates that they have an independent effect on the behavior of the legislators that is not subsumed in, or mediated by, other variables such as party affiliation. These findings are consistent with Wängnerud's (2000) study, cited above. Notwithstanding the differences that we found between the patterns of activity of men and women, it is important to note that this was not a black-and-white dichotomy between the sexes, but rather a set of trends and tendencies. Women do also propose bills on fiscal subjects; they submit parliamentary questions on transportation matters and industry; and they are members of such "power committees" as the

Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee and the Finance Committee. In this context, we can state that the typology we employed in this study—or more precisely, the division into women's domain issues and non-women's domain issues that was constructed on the basis of this typology—at times proved itself, and at other times less so. In reality, the division is not so sharp or exact, and we frequently encountered a blurring of the boundaries between the sexes and the issues.

Thus for example, in our analysis of private members' bills, but primarily in our analysis of parliamentary questions, we found that, overall, women are more involved in non-women's domain issues than in women's domain issues. This suggests that women in the Knesset do not confine themselves to addressing women's domain issues; on the contrary, they choose to invest many of their limited resources in addressing other issues. Israeli society is perceived, to a large extent, as male-dominated—some might even say patriarchal—for two key reasons: the fact that it is a rather traditional society in which religion has pride of place in the social fabric; and the prominence of security issues due to the ongoing conflict. This may influence the fact that female legislators in Israel, like their male counterparts, often invest greater resources in addressing non-women's domain issues.

There may also be a further explanation, unique to Israel: namely, the size of the Knesset and the cabinet, a factor that is structural in nature, but which also has a gender aspect. The Knesset is a small parliament, whereas Israel's cabinets are generally large. As a result, roughly one third of Knesset members—chiefly men— occupy positions in the cabinet, leaving only two thirds available for parliamentary activity on committees, and eligible, under the Knesset Rules of Procedure, to propose private members' bills and submit parliamentary questions to ministers. Thus, female MKs, most of whom do not serve as ministers or deputy ministers, fill the places allocated to their factions on the committees, whether on women's and social affairs committees or power committees. If we ignore, for purposes

of this study, the many disadvantages of belonging to a large number of committees, from a strictly gender standpoint serving on a power committee exposes female MKs to a range of "non-feminine" areas—exposure that is presumably put to use in other forms of activity, such as proposing bills and submitting parliamentary questions in areas not necessarily associated with women.

Be that as it may, it is important to emphasize that the disparity between the extent of involvement in women's domain issues as opposed to non-women's domain issues is much greater among the male MKs than among the females. That is to say, men are relatively much more involved than women in issues not classified as feminine.

Based on a comparison of the level of involvement in each of the categories studied (without classifying them a priori as women's or non-women's domain), we can state that the two areas that can be defined unequivocally as belonging to the women's domain are women's issues, and children and family issues. In both these categories, there was a significant predominance of women in most forms of parliamentary activity studied (for the significance tests that we conducted on the differences between men and women in these categories, see Appendix B). It would appear that in these areas, a somewhat patriarchal approach has been maintained, even among male legislators, whereby women are the ones who hold primary responsibility for running the home, raising the children, and keeping the family together. The fact that it is almost exclusively female legislators who are involved in the category of women's issues, and that many male legislators refrain from activity in this area, shows that, to a certain degree, there is an attitude at play of "if I am not for myself, who will be for me," meaning that if women do not look out for themselves, or if female legislators do not concern themselves with advancing the status of women in society, no one else will do it for them.

This, in and of itself, is a key argument in favor of the descriptive representation of women in the legislature. In other words, even if we assume that in all other areas there is similarity—and at times even equivalence—between the parliamentary activity of men and of women, the very fact that it is mainly women who are involved in women's issues, and who engage in advancing the status of women in society and promoting gender equality, is a crucially important normative justification for increasing their parliamentary representation. This is especially true in an era in which women are still discriminated against in employment; are frequently excluded from the public space, among several population groups; are subject to sexual harassment; and sadly, bear the brunt of most incidents of violence both within and outside the family.

This forces us to examine how to increase the parliamentary representation of women in Israel. Given the under-representation of women in the Knesset, and the fact that such representation is affected by many variables which are very hard to change (see Chapter Two), we are left with an institutional pathway to increase women's parliamentary representation: the adoption of gender quotas for women. We will review this common institutional mechanism in the next chapter.

Chapter Four
Gender Quotas for Women in Parliament

Women's gender quotas are an institutional mechanism designed to raise the proportion of women in parliament (Wängnerud 2009, 57). The use of such quotas began during the 1970s in North-West Europe, since when—and especially since the mid–1990s—it has spread to other countries,[27] so that today gender quotas for women are common in more than a hundred countries worldwide. Some scholars consider the adoption of these quotas to be a "global trend" (Praud 2012, 288), while others refer to it as the central electoral reform in recent years (Celis, Krook, and Meier 2011, 514). This chapter will discuss this mechanism. First, we will cover the various types of quotas for women and their distribution around the world; then we will focus on the process of adopting gender quotas and their impact on the proportion of women in parliaments around the world; and finally, we will describe the gender quotas proposed in Israel over the years, those adopted, and their effect.

1. Types of Gender Quotas for Women

In the research literature it is customary to distinguish between three main types of gender quota: reserved seats, legislated quotas, and voluntary party quotas (Krook 2009, 6; Krook, Lovenduski, and Squires 2009; Jalalzai and Krook 2010). Some researchers have identified an

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27   Our research addresses (legislated or voluntary) gender quotas for national parliaments only. It does not address quotas for provincial legislatures or the European Parliament. Where the parliament is bicameral (a legislature comprised of two houses), we are interested only in the lower house, which is usually more significant and influential.

additional type: the soft quota (for example, Krook, Lovenduski, and Squires 2009).[28] We focus on the first three types of quota, and present their distribution among established democracies in Table 15.

Table 15: Gender Quotas in 35 Democracies

Type of Quota	Countries Using this Type of Quota
No use of quotas	Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Japan, New Zealand, Slovakia, United States
Reserved seats	-
Legislated party quotas	Belgium, Costa Rica, France, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain
Voluntary party quotas*	Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Israel, Italy, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom

* Refers only to countries that do not have other types of gender quotas, and where political parties represented in parliament employ gender quotas to enhance the representation of women. It should be noted that in the vast majority of these countries not all parties have adopted voluntary gender quotas.

Sources: Krook 2009, 227–238; Quotaproject 2012.

28 "Soft quotas" include a variety of measures adopted by the state or the parties to raise the proportion of women in parliament, without imposing specific obligations relating to the proportion of women among the members of parliament or the party's candidates for parliament. Such measures may include: setting future goals rather than fixing a binding principle regarding the representation of women; setting quotas for women's representation in the party's internal institutions but not among the party's candidates for parliament (Krook,

Reserved Seats

In this type of quota, the law stipulates that a certain number or percentage of seats in the parliament will be assigned exclusively to women (Jalalzai and Krook 2010, 16). The number of seats allocated to women varies greatly, ranging from 3% in Kenya to 31% in Uganda. It should be noted that in most cases women are not prohibited from competing for the other seats in parliament as well. As shown in Table 15 above, this type of quota is not customary in established democracies: it is not used in any country of the countries that are defined as "free" by the Freedom House organization. However, it is common is many non-liberal democracies and authoritarian regimes in Africa and Asia, including Uganda, Eritrea, Tanzania, Rwanda, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Somalia, Djibouti, Morocco, and Kenya. These quotas were first adopted in the mid–1990s, and their use spread notably during the first half of the 2000s. There are different methods for allocating reserved seats for women, such as determining single-member districts which are exclusively for women (Uganda); allocating special seats for women selected by a special committee (Rwanda); and distributing "surplus seats" to women only, according to their party's vote share (Bangladesh), or (as in Jordan) to female candidates who failed to get elected (Krook 2009; Celis, Krook, and Meier 2011, 518; Quotaproject 2012; IPU 2013).

Legislated Party Quotas

These are quotas rooted in legislation that requires every party running for election to ensure that a certain number or proportion of

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Lovenduski, and Squires 2009, 786); formal declarations (for example, in the constitution) to support gender equality in politics; and, dedicating resources of the state or political parties to encourage women to enter politics, such as holding workshops for women who wish to do so (Diaz 2005, 23).

its candidates will be women, or alternatively requires parties to comply with rules regarding the inclusion and ranking of women candidates in electoral constituencies or in candidate lists. It should be noted that these laws usually refer to the proportion or placement of "both genders" and not specifically to women, though it is clear that their goal is to address the under-representation suffered by women. This type of quota is found in eight of 35 democratic countries listed in Table 15: Spain, France, Portugal, Belgium, Costa Rica, Slovenia, Poland, and Ireland. It is also in use in other countries classified as "free" by the Freedom House organization, such as Argentina, Brazil, South Korea, and Serbia, and in addition, it was employed in Italy for one election during the 1990s.

Proposals for adopting similar quotas have been raised in many other countries, and such quotas are used in various countries in elections for regional parliaments, for the upper legislative house, and for the European Parliament. They are especially common in Catholic countries in Europe and among relatively new democracies, mostly in Latin America (which are also Catholic). Legislated quotas were initially adopted in developing countries at the beginning of the 1990s and then spread to European countries, mainly from the early 2000s (Celis, Krook, and Meier 2011, 520; Quotaproject 2012; IPU 2013).

The minimum proportion of candidates from each gender required by law usually lies between a third and half (Jalalzai and Krook 2010, 15). Of the countries in this study's population, in Belgium the proportion is 50%, as it will be in Costa Rica from the next election (in the previous election it was 40%); in France 49%; Spain 40%; Slovenia and Poland 35%; Portugal 33%; and in Ireland it will be 30% in the upcoming elections (the first election in which they will be used), rising to 40% in future elections. As regards the placement of women among the party candidates there is a variety of options, which are mainly dictated by the nature of the electoral system.

In electoral systems based on single-member districts parties are usually free to place candidates as they wish in the different

constituencies. In France for example, which uses single-member districts, the quota law only states that there should be a 51:49 ratio between the genders (Quotaproject 2012; Murray 2012). It says nothing about how to place candidates in districts which are considered safe; and thus a party can, if it wishes, place its female candidates in districts where their chances of winning are relatively low. The quota law recently adopted in Ireland, where the electoral system is somewhat candidate-based with no lists of candidates (although with multi-member districts), also says nothing about the placement of women in different constituencies. By contrast, proportional list electoral systems, with multi-member districts, often have clear rules about the order of women on the party list. These rules may require that female candidates be placed in high positions on the list (those positions for which there is a high probability that the candidates holding them will be elected to parliament). In countries where these rules are not practiced, women may be pushed down the party list and therefore not elected to parliament.

In countries which do use candidate lists, the method which ensures the maximum representation of women is that of zipping. According to this method, a party must alternate consecutively between men and women on the list. This method has been adopted in Costa Rica in 2010, and will take effect at the country's next elections. Spain uses a similar method, although less strict: every successive group of five candidates on the list must include either two or three candidates of each gender. Similarly, in Portugal the parties are required to place candidates from both genders in each successive group of three candidates (Baum and Espirito-Santo 2012). In Belgium, however, where there is a high quota of 50%, the quota law only addresses the top positions on the party list: each party is required to place a woman in one of two first slots on its list, and there are no rules regarding the location of other women on the list (Meier 2012). In Poland and Slovenia the quota laws do not address the ranking of women on the party lists at all.

Since these are legislated quotas, failure to comply with their requirements entails the imposition of sanctions on the party. In some countries, parties which do not comply with the quota law are disqualified from running in the election (sometimes after being issued a warning and offered the opportunity to change their list). In other countries, the main sanction is a monetary fine. Of the countries referred to in Table 15, in Belgium, Costa Rica, Spain, Poland, and Slovenia parties that do not comply with the quota law are disqualified. However, in France, Portugal, and Ireland such parties are fined. In France, for example, a party that does not meet the quota requirements has its party finance cut by a rate of 75% of the difference in percentage points between the proportion of men and women on its list (up until 2007 the penalty was 50% of the difference). If, for example, a party has 60% male candidates and 40% women candidates, it will lose 15% of its finance—75% of the 20 percentage point difference between men and women (Assemblée Nationale 2011). Portugal also employs a progressive fine: if the proportion of women on the party list is between 20% and 33%, the fine will be 25% of the party finance; if the proportion of women on the party list is less than 20%, the fine will be 50% of the party finance. A fine of 50% of the party finance is also imposed in any case of deviation from the rules relating the ranking of women on the party list (Baum and Espirito-Santo 2012). In Ireland, any party that does not meet the quota requirement will lose 50% of its public funding (Minihan 2012). It should be noted that in many countries there is more than one mechanism for calculating the financing available to political parties. In such cases the abovementioned fines may affect only one of these mechanisms: for example, in France, a portion of the party's financing is determined by the percentage of votes won by the party in the elections, while another portion is determined according to the number of seats held by the party in parliament. The fine for not meeting the quota requirements affects only the first type of financing, and not the second.

There are other, less common, mechanisms for enforcing legal party quotas: First, instead of imposing a penalty for failing to comply with the quotas—as is customary in France, Portugal, and Ireland—it is possible to offer a "bonus" to parties that do meet the quota. Substantively, the two are similar, because parties that do not meet the quota are not disqualified from running, but are discriminated against, relative to parties that did meet the quota, in terms of party financing. Second, instead of setting quotas for the party's candidates for parliament, it is possible to set quotas for the MPs elected on their behalf—that is, it is the end result that counts. Third, it is possible to set the ratio of the quotas to simply more than 0%. This means that any party that presents even a single candidate—or which has a single female representative in parliament—meets the quota. Croatia uses all three of these mechanisms: parties get 10% more financing for every woman who enters parliament on their behalf (Quotaproject 2012). A fourth option is to offer non-financial rewards to parties that meet the quota. Such a mechanism is employed in East Timor, where parties who put women on their lists receive longer broadcasting time during the campaign (Maltbie 2011).

Voluntary Party Quotas

This type of quota is based on a commitment the party undertakes on its own initiative to voluntarily adopt gender quotas for women. This type of quota is the most popular among the 35 democracies examined: 20 of them have parties using voluntary party quotas. These quotas are also used in some countries that adopted legal party quotas. Voluntary party quotas were first adopted by the socialist and social-democratic parties in Scandinavia during the 1970s, and then spread to other left-wing, right-wing, and center parties, as well as to many other countries (Krook 2009, 7).

The particular mechanism adopted by each party depends on both the country's electoral system and the party's candidate selection

method. There are a variety of mechanisms employed; we will refer here to the main ones. We will begin with parties operating under plurality electoral systems, and end with parties operating under PR systems.

Several mechanisms are apparent when examining parties operating in countries with plurality electoral systems and single-member districts:

- **Aspirant Quotas**. This mechanism is customary in cases where the party uses a shortlist in its candidate selection process. Party institutions select a shortlist of candidates from a larger pool of candidates, who then compete to represent the party. A party which adopts the aspirant quota mechanism decides that in some electoral districts (or in all districts) the shortlist must include a certain percentage of women. In the early 1980s, for example, the Social Democratic Party and the Liberal Democrats in the UK decided that every shortlist must include at least one female candidate (Krook and Squires 2006). This mechanism increases the chances that the party will present a female candidate in many districts, although it does not guarantee it.

- **All-Women Shortlists**. This mechanism dictates that some of the party shortlists will include only women. This ensures that the party will present a female candidate in those districts where an all-women shortlist is used. For example, after its failure in the 1992 elections the British Labour Party decided that in half of the electoral districts in which it had a good chance of winning (based on the results of previous elections), and where there was no incumbent MP running on its behalf, it would use all-women shortlists. Later on, this decision was disqualified by the courts due to sexual discrimination. Once the law was changed, to allow the use of all-women shortlists, the Labour Party readopted them in the 2005 and 2010 elections (for further details see below) (Krook and Squires 2006).

- **Twinning.** In this method the party teams together two nearby electoral districts, in which it has similar chances to win, and nominates a male candidate in one district and a female candidate in the other. This method was previously used by the Labour Party in the elections for the regional parliaments of Wales and Scotland (Krook and Squires 2006).

- **Appointments**. In cases where the party candidates are selected by an exclusive selectorate (a party leader or a small party caucus), or in cases where the party leadership can intervene in the selection of candidates, or is required to approve them, the leadership can ensure that the party will meet the adopted voluntary quota. In Canada, for example—where it is accepted that the party leadership approves the selection of candidates made by the party's provincial branches—the leadership of the New Democratic Party (NDP) and the Liberal Party have taken some steps, over the last years, to increase the representation of women among the party's candidates and MPs. These included a direct intervention in the candidate selection process in favor of women candidates, or the approval of male candidates only if the institution responsible for selecting candidates proved that it was impossible to find a worthy female candidate instead (or a candidate who is a member of any minority group) to be nominated in the constituency (Cross 2006).

For parties in PR electoral systems, it is important to address not only the number of women on the list, but also their location on it. As explained above, when there are no rules concerning the ranking of women on the party list, they can be pushed down into places from which they will simply not get elected to parliament. In this case the method that ensures the maximum representation of women in the party list is the zipper method, adopted by many prominent political parties in Europe, such as the Social Democratic Party in Sweden,

the Netherlands Labor Party (PvdA), the Social Democratic Party in Germany, and the Greens in Italy. Other parties have adopted quotas that guarantee representation of women on the list to a lesser extent than the zipper method, both in terms of the proportion of women on the list and in terms of their location (Hazan and Rahat 2010, 66–69). The conventional quota rates in established democracies range from 20% to 50%: alongside parties who adopted the zipper method, the Social Democratic Party in Germany and in Austria and the Irish Labor Party set a quota of 40% (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2008); the Social Democratic and the Christian Democratic parties in Luxembourg, 33%; the Social Democratic Party in Cyprus, 30%; and, the Social Democratic Party of Hungary and the Labor Party in Malta, 20%. As we shall see in the discussion below, voluntary party quotas at different rates—higher (40%) and lower (less than 20%)—are also accepted in some parties in Israel.

In PR systems, the nature of the selectorate that selects the party candidates is also of great importance. When the candidates of the party are appointed by an exclusive selectorate it is relatively easy to meet party quotas. In fact, in these cases it is often not necessary to officially adopt voluntary party quotas; as long as the exclusive selectorate is interested in maintaining a certain level of representation of women, at realistic places on the party list, it can do so even without the adoption of formal quotas. However, if the candidates of the party are selected by a relatively inclusive selectorate (party activists, party members, or party voters) then this becomes more difficult, since elections—unlike appointments—carry no guarantees of representativeness.

In such cases, in order to meet its stated objectives regarding the representation of women on its candidate list, a party can use one of three options:

- **Separate Districts.** In this method, women are defined as a separate social segment in every respect. They run in a separate

constituency, in which all candidates and eligible voters are women. The party pre-defines the positions on its lists which will be allocated to the women who win in this district. The use of this method is common in the major Israeli parties for sectors and social groups (Arabs, Druze, or residents of kibbutzim or moshavim) and for geographic areas, but not for women.

- **Reserved Minimal Position**. Here, men and women run together in the same districts, and the eligible voters are women and men alike. Only after the results are received, in the event that women were not elected to the spots reserved for them on the list, or to higher positions, then the female candidates who received the highest number of votes are moved up the list, to the predetermined reserved spots. It is possible to reserve specific spots for women, or to be more general, for example determining that the party must have three women candidates within every consecutive group of 10 candidates. This is the most common mechanism used among Israeli parties which have adopted voluntary gender quotas.

- **Reserved Fixed Position**. This method combines elements from the two above-mentioned methods. Here women compete against other women on pre-defined spots on the party list, but the eligible voters are both women and men (Rahat 2010). This mechanism is also used by Israeli parties to secure the representation of certain social groups, but not for women.

2. The Adoption of Gender Quotas for Women: Processes and Effects

As already stated, the adoption of gender quotas for women has become more common since the 1990s. However, this is not a uniform process, and in different countries it has had different characteristics

and different motivations. From a historical perspective, it is customary to distinguish between two types of process leading to the adoption of such quotas (Diaz 2005, 83–81; Dahlerup 2006, 6–8).

The first type is related to cultural and socioeconomic changes which have led to improvements in the status of women in society, as a consequence of which political parties decided to adopt voluntary gender quotas. This is thus a bottom-up process. The quotas adopted usually do not affect the percentage of women in the parliament directly and immediately, but rather generate a slow and gradual change in this direction. The adoption of such quotas in northwest Europe, and especially in the Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands and Germany, is a clear example of this type of process.

In the second type of process, the adoption of quotas is not a consequence of cultural or socioeconomic change. Instead, the state decides, in an example of a top-down process, to immediately raise the percentage of women in parliament by enforcing legislated gender quotas or reserved seats. For this reason, in some of the countries that have adopted this kind of quota, the high percentage of female representation in parliament does not reflect their low status in society. Clear examples can be found in Africa and Asia. Similar processes have also taken place in European countries, although there the gap between the representation of women in parliament and their overall status in society is usually not as extreme. In many cases, parties adopted voluntary quotas before the state enforced quotas by legislation.

The literature identifies five key factors that have led to the adoption of quotas:

A. **Women's Activities.** This refers to the activities of intra-party women's organizations, civil society women's organizations, and the individual activity of influential women inside and outside parties in order to promote the adoption of various gender quotas. Usually such action is motivated by normative reasons and by the belief that

this is the best way to promote the status of women in politics (Celis, Krook, and Meier 2011, 521). Naturally, the higher the existing status of women in society and within political parties, the greater the impact of these activities. This explains why the chances of adopting gender quotas for women are higher in two cases: first, in parties which already have a high proportion of women in their institutions and top positions, and which have already adopted quotas for women in their intra-party institutions (Caul 2001; Caul Kittilson 2011); and second, in countries where the proportion of women in parliament and in other senior institutions is already relatively high, including countries that have introduced gender quotas for women in public institutions, such as boards of directors of public companies (Hazan and Rahat 2010, 140).

B. **Strategic Considerations of the Political Elites.** In many cases, senior politicians support the adoption of gender quotas because of electoral considerations, namely, in order to improve the party's public image, and especially in order to gain the support of female voters and women's organizations. The phenomenon of contagion is especially relevant in this context. Because of the political competition between parties, and the parties' need to avoid being perceived as unrepresentative, the adoption of gender quotas for women by one party will most likely lead to their adoption by others (Matland and Studler 1996; Celis, Krook, and Meier 2011, 521; Caul, 2001). According to some scholars, gender quotas are seen by politicians as an inexpensive way to demonstrate their commitment to the issue of gender equality, without investing considerable resources (Krook 2007, 337). According to another argument, politicians support the adoption of gender quotas for women also because they believe that the women who will be elected via the quotas will be dependent on them and loyal to them (ibid.).

Electoral considerations explain why politicians are expected to support the adoption of gender quotas, particularly in political parties

operating under a proportional list electoral system or a system of multi-member districts: first, because the phenomenon of contagion is more common under these systems (Matland and Studler 1996; Wängnerud 2009); and second, because senior politicians who compete in large electoral districts will be less fearful of losing their seat in parliament to a woman, than will politicians elected in small electoral districts (Matland and Taylor 1997; Matland 1998). In addition, in new political systems—such as the Scottish and Welsh ones, in which there are fewer prominent politicians who fear losing their seats to women—quotas are likely to encounter less opposition (Dahlerup 1998).

C. **Political Culture.** Characteristics relating to political culture can explain several phenomena: (1) Countries with a rich and pronounced egalitarian political culture were the first to introduce gender quotas for women in the 1970s, particularly countries in North-West Europe. Only later did gender quotas spread to countries which do not have a similar political culture; (2) Voluntary gender quotas are much more common in various left-wing parties—social democratic parties, communist parties, and green parties—than they are in liberal and Christian-democratic parties, whereas conservative and nationalist parties hardly adopt such quotas at all. The explanation for this difference lies in the fact that leftist parties have a more gender-egalitarian political culture than other parties (Caul Kittilson 2011, 13). Several studies have found a significant correlation between the degree of support for the adoption of gender quotas demonstrated by MPs and their party affiliation—representatives of parties which advocate for government intervention in the economy, and representatives of anti-religious parties, were more supportive of the adoption of gender quotas (Dubrow 2011); (3) In countries that hold a tradition of multicultural representation for various groups in the population—for example, countries that have quotas for the representation of minority groups, a tradition of consensual democracy, or a corporatist interest representation system—

the adoption of quotas for women may be seen simply as an extension of the existing group representation system, and therefore receive much support (Krook 2007, 377–378; Celis, Krook, and Meier 2011, 522).

D. **International Influence.** Since the mid–1990s many international organizations—the UN, the Socialist International, the European Union, the Commonwealth, and more—have called upon countries to promote the participation of women in politics in general, and to increase the proportion of women in parliaments in particular. The 1995 UN Beijing Declaration was especially influential (United Nations 1995). International organizations also encouraged countries to actively adopt gender quotas for women, using such measures as campaigns and personal pressure on politicians, while intra-state organizations which supported the adoption of quotas collaborated with similar organizations in other countries and with the international organizations. These developments mainly affected new democracies and developing countries, which have adopted quotas, among other reasons, in order to win international aid and to strengthen their international legitimacy (Krook 2007, 372; Celis, Krook, and Meier 2011, 522).

E. **Intra-Party Democratization.** Many parties have adopted gender quotas for women following the expansion of the selectorate used in their process of candidate selection. This is due to the fact that with an inclusive selectorate it is harder to secure a minimum representation of women, as already noted. The use of gender quotas helps the party ensure the representation of women, while being perceived as more democratic due to the expansion of its selectorate (Rahat 2009).

The above overview of the different types of quotas and the processes which led to their adoption raises the following question: Did the adoption of gender quotas improve the representation of women in national parliaments? To answer this, we compared the percentage of women in parliament in each country alongside the quota adopted, if any. Table 16 (below) shows the 30 countries with the highest percentage of women in

parliament and the gender quotas used in these countries. We also indicate the countries' scores in the 2012 edition of the Global Gender Gap index produced by the World Economic Forum (2012), which ranks the gender gap in each country by weighting different inequality measurements on economy, education, health, and politics. The country ranked first in this index is the most egalitarian in terms of gender.

The table allows us to assess, albeit in a limited fashion, the effects of various quotas on the representation of women. To this end, we distinguish between countries where the overall status of women in society is low and those in which their overall status is relatively high. In the first type of countries, as stated, the adoption of gender quotas is usually a top-down process, and the type of quotas adopted are usually reserved seats and legislated quotas. As can be seen, in such cases the impact of quotas on the representation of women is substantial, and they lead to a fairly high proportion of women in parliament, which does not at all correlate with women's low status in society. The table includes several such countries, some of which are clear examples of developing countries, such as Rwanda, Angola, East Timor, Senegal, Nepal, and Algeria, and others are Eastern European countries, such as Serbia and Macedonia. The most salient example in this regard is perhaps that of Rwanda, which adopted in 2003—in the first democratic elections held in the country since 1988—a reserved seats quota at a rate of 30%. Today it has the world's highest proportion of women in parliament. Nepal is also a marked example for the noticeable gap between women's low status in society and rather high proportion in parliament, which is a result, in part, of the use of legislated gender quotas.

Table 16: The 30 Countries with the Highest Proportion of Women in
Parliament, April 2013*

	Proportion of Women in Parliament	Type of Quota	World Gender Gap Rank
Rwanda	56.3	Reserved seats (30%)	Not ranked
Cuba	48.9	None	19
Sweden	44.7	Voluntary party	4
Senegal	42.7	Legislated party (50%)	90
Finland	42.5	None	2
South Africa	42.3	Voluntary party	16
Nicaragua	40.2	Voluntary party	9
Iceland	39.7	Voluntary party	1
Norway	39.6	Voluntary party	3
Mozambique	39.2	Voluntary party	23
Denmark	39.1	None	7
Netherlands	38.7	Voluntary party	11
Costa Rica	38.6	Legislated party (40%)	29
East Timor	38.5	Legislated party (25%)	68
Belgium	38.0	Legislated party (50%)	12
Argentina	37.4	Legislated party (30%)	32
Mexico	36.8	Legislated party (40%)	84
Spain	36.0	Legislated party (40%)	26
Tanzania	36.0	Legislated party (30%)	46
Uganda	35.0	Reserved seats (31%)	28
Angola	34.1	Legislated party (30%)	Not Ranked
Nepal	33.2	Legislated party (32%)	123
Serbia	33.2	Legislated party (30%)	50
Germany	32.9	Legislated party	13
Macedonia	32.5	Legislated party (33%)	61
New Zealand	32.2	None	6
Slovenia	32.2	Legislated party (35%)	38
Algeria	31.6	Legislated party (20%–50%, according to DM)	120
Guyana	31.1	Legislated party (33%)	42
Burundi	30.5	Reserved seats (33%)	24

* The table only includes countries with a population of greater than 100,000.

Sources: Krook 2009, 227–238; World Economic Forum 2012, 8–9; Quotaproject 2012; IPU 2013.

In the second type of countries, in which the status of women in society is relatively high, the direct effect of the quotas is harder to define. Since the status of women in society is one of the most influential variables on the percentage of women in parliament, the parliamentary representation of women in many of the countries which have adopted quotas is expected to be high even without them. This is especially true with regard to voluntary gender quotas: as can be seen, in seven of the countries in Table 16 there are only voluntary, not legislated, party gender quotas, and in all of them the status of women in society is high.[29] Thus the table does not provide an answer to the question of whether the voluntary gender quotas adopted in these countries indeed helped raise the proportion of women in parliament.

Other empirical studies do seem to concur that voluntary gender quotas are likely to significantly increase the proportion of women among the MPs of parties which adopt them (Caul 1999; Krook and Squires 2006; Caul Kittilson 2006, 64), and that the adoption of voluntary quotas by important parties in the country is expected to raise the overall percentage of female parliamentary representation in that country (Caul 2001; Diaz 2005, 80). But scholars also claim that this variable cannot on its own explain the differences in the percentage of women in parliaments of different countries, and that such differences are influenced by other factors as well, particularly an egalitarian political culture and the socioeconomic status of women in society (Diaz 2005, 76–80).

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29 Two of these countries are developing countries: Mozambique and Nicaragua. Both demonstrate a unique circumstantial phenomenon, in that in both countries one party controls a majority of the seats in parliament. In Mozambique that party holds 76% of the seats, and in Nicaragua 68%. Thus once such a party adopts voluntary gender quotas, this results in a high proportion of women in parliament, even if the status of women in society in those countries is not necessarily high.

Evidence for the impact of legislated party quotas in Western countries is also inconclusive. It seems that such quotas lead to an increase in the percentage of women in parliament, but often only gradually and partially (Jalalzai and Krook 2010; Praud 2012). However, examples for the success of these quotas do exist. One of the most successful examples is that of Argentina, where legislated quotas were adopted in the early 1990s, and since then the percentage of women in parliament has jumped from around 5% to 37%–40% in each of the three most recent elections. Costa Rica, Belgium, and France are other examples of a successful use of legislated quotas (see Table 17 below). Costa Rica's party quota legislation was adopted in 1996, and this was followed by an increase in the percentage of women in parliament from around 16% after the 1994 elections to 39% in the elections of 2006 and 2010. In 1995 the percentage of women in the Belgian parliament was 12%. Prior to the 1999 elections legislated gender quotas of 50% came into effect, and since then the percentage of women in parliament has been gradually increasing, reaching 38% after the 2010 elections.

In France, progress was slower. The legislated quotas of 49% were set at the turn of the millennium, but in the elections of 2002 and 2007 the improvement in the representation of women was only moderate, and well below the target. In the most recent elections (June 2012) a more significant leap was recorded, and women now make up about 27% of all MPs in France. In Portugal too, the proportion of women in parliament has risen since the adoption of legislated quotas, but only moderately. In Spain, however, is more difficult to assess the direct impact of quotas, as the representation of women in parliament was high even before their adoption in 2007 (36%), and it has not changed since.

Table 17: The Adoption of Legal Party Quotas in Five Countries and the
Increase in Female Representation in Parliament (%)

France	1997	Quota	2002	2007	2012	
	10.9	adoption	12.3	18.5	26.9	
Belgium	1995	Quota	1999	2003	2007	2010
	12.0	adoption	23.3	35.3	34.7	38.0
Costa Rica	1994	Quota	1998	2002	2006	2010
	15.8	adoption	19.3	31.6	38.6	38.6
Portugal	1999	2002	2005	Quota	2009	2011
	18.7	19.1	21.5	adoption	27.4	26.5
Spain	1996	2002	2004	Quota	2008	2011
	24.6	28.3	36.0	adoption	36.3	36.0

In conclusion, it can be said that the success of legislated and voluntary party quotas is not guaranteed, and in different cases quotas may lead to different results. For reserved seats quotas, their success depends, naturally, only on their enforcement. When it comes to legislated and voluntary party gender quotas, however, the literature mentions three main factors that affect the degree of their success (Jalalai and Krook 2010, 17–18; Krook 2009, 39–56):

A. **Quota Rules and their Implementation.** For both legislated and voluntary party gender quotas, the rules stipulating the location of female candidates on the party list (or in the districts, in the case of single-member districts) are of immense importance. In cases where there are no clear rules regarding the percentage of safe slots to be held by women (as mentioned earlier, "safe" according to the number of seats the party won in the last elections, or the districts in which it won), it is very likely that women will be pushed down the party list, or

placed in single-member districts the party has no chance of winning, and thus the proportion of women parliament will not grow.

An outstanding example is that of Costa Rica. In the 1998 elections a quota law of 40% took effect, but since there were no rules regarding the ranking of women on the party lists, the percentage of women in parliament only grew to 19% after the elections. However, in 1999 the courts ruled that the law also required that women occupy 40% of the "safe" places on each party list, according to the number of seats the party held after the previous elections. Subsequently, the percentage of women in parliament increased to 35% after those elections, and later to 39%. Parties can ensure that women are placed in safe slots even when the elections are held in single-member districts by using the twinning method, or by using the method implemented by the British Labour Party, according to which in half of the electoral districts in which it has a good chance of winning (based on the results of previous elections), and there is no incumbent MP running on its behalf, it will use all-women shortlists to select its candidate. In France however, which has legislated a 49% quota, parties are free to place candidates in the constituencies as they please, which compromises the quota's effectiveness.

For legislated gender quotas to work, the issue of sanctions to be imposed on parties which do not comply is of great importance. If such parties are banned from competing in the elections, it is most likely that the vast majority of parties will obey the quota rules; however, if disobedient parties are only fined, there may be some parties which will choose to bear the financial penalty rather than place women at the required rate. Indeed, in France, where parties which do not meet the quota rules are punished with a fine, and parties are free to place women candidates in the electoral districts they please, legislated gender quotas have been less effective.

B. **Support for Quotas Among Different Actors: Party Elites, the Courts, the Media and Women's Groups.** Support for quotas among party elites is especially important if there are no clear rules regarding the positions to be held for women on the party list or in various constituencies. Whether quotas are mandatory or voluntary, the absence of such rules allows strong intra-party actors to use their influence in order to keep women away from safe slots. Similarly, when gender quota legislation only imposes fines on the parties which do not comply with the quota rules, party elites can influence the party to choose to pay the financial penalty instead of toeing the line. The effect party elites have on the success of gender quotas, even after their preliminary adoption, explains why left-wing (especially post-materialist) parties that adopt voluntary gender quotas usually implement them more successfully than do right-wing parties that adopt similar quotas. The political elites of left-wing parties share a more egalitarian political culture than those of right-wing parties, and therefore advocate the implementation of gender quotas more strongly and effectively (Davidson-Schmich 2006). Additionally, the support of the courts and the quasi-judicial intra-party institutions is necessary in order to enforce the quotas and impose sanctions on those who violate them. The support of the media and of women's organizations is also needed in order to pressure the parties to implement the quotas, and to expose cases in which they have not been implemented.

C. **Additional Electoral Characteristics.** According to the research literature, gender quotas have a better chance of increasing the percentage of women in parliament in proportional representation electoral systems and in large electoral districts. There are two reasons for this: first, the contagion phenomenon is more widespread under such institutional conditions, and therefore the introduction of voluntary gender quotas by one party will more likely result in their introduction by others; and second, politicians competing in large electoral districts

can be expected to support gender quotas more readily than politicians competing in small districts (because the personal price the former can expect to pay is smaller), and as stated above, the support of political elites is important for the success of the quotas.

The balance of power between the party's national-central organization and its local branches and sectors is also important. In many cases, local districts and sectors are likely to oppose quotas, for fear of women's representation coming at the expense of their own and damaging their autonomy. Therefore, the more powerful the party's central organization, the more efficiently it will be able to impose quotas.

3. Gender Quotas in Israel: A Historical Review

Over the years several political parties in Israel have adopted voluntary gender quotas. Additionally, several proposals for the adoption of legislated gender quotas have been submitted to the Knesset, but so far none have been accepted. This section provides a brief overview of the history of gender quotas in Israel and their impact.

Voluntary Gender Quotas in Israel

1948 until the 1970s. Formal voluntary party gender quotas, that is, quotas which are fixed and formally stated in the party regulations, were rare until the 1970s. However, even without such quotas the representation of women was ensured in several political parties. The common method for selecting candidates among Israeli parties by the late 1970s was that of a small selection committee or party caucus (known in Hebrew as the "Organizing Committee"). Thus party candidates were selected by a small, unelected party elite. The party caucus, should it so desire, could therefore ensure that a range of social groups, as well as women, would be represented on the party list of candidates.

The issue of fair representation for women was referenced in the candidate selection processes from the first election in 1949, and even before that, during the elections for the institutions of the "Yishuv" (the Jewish settlement in Palestine under British Mandate rule). During this time, and even up to the 1990s, this issue was particularly prominent in two groups of parties: socialist parties (Mapai, Mapam, Achdut Ha'avoda) which advocated, at least in public, equal rights for women; and parties in which intra-party women's organizations worked to improve the representation of women on the list, such as Mapai and the NRP.

In Mapai and Mapam it was customary for the selection committee to maintain a minimal proportion of women on the party list (Brichta 1977, 117; 132). In Mapam one woman was usually placed in a safe slot on the party list (in 1949 the party even had two women who served as MKs on its behalf), and when this woman retired she was replace by another. Accordingly, Emma Talmi replaced Hannah Lamdan in 1955, and Haika Grossman replaced Talmi in 1965. In Mapai women received a minimal representation of 4–7 safe slots on the party's list of candidates for the Knesset. However, women were not happy with this arrangement and occasionally demanded, unsuccessfully, for the party to adopt a formal voluntary quota of 25%: they did so in 1959 (Brichta 1977, 117) and 1973 (Nicodemus 1973). In the national-religious parties (Mizrahi and Mizrahi Workers, and from 1955 the NRP) women were not placed on the list at first. As a result, during the first elections of 1949 national-religious women chose to run separately, forming an all-women National Women's Party (see below). Towards the 1961 elections the female members of the NRP party demanded that women be placed in safe slots on the party list (Brichta 1977, 160). This may have been the reason behind Tova Sanhadray's nomination to the 11th slot on the list, a slot which got her elected to the Knesset. Sanhadray was again placed in a safe slot and elected to the Knesset in the next two elections as well. The General Zionists also fought for women's representation. Shoshana Parsitz was placed in a safe slot and elected to the Knesset in 1949 and in 1951. However, in 1955 she was placed in the third slot on the party list

only after threatening to resign, and in 1959 she was pushed down to an unsafe slot on the list despite similar threats, and despite Yosef Rokach's attempts to secure her a safe slot (Herut 1959).

The Achdut Ha'avoda party provides an exceptional example of the use of formal quotas, in forming the party's "shortlist" for the fourth Knesset (1959). In accordance with the party's candidate selection regulations, the party agency selected 100 people for its shortlist, who were ranked by the nomination committee. According to the rules adopted in that election, 20% of the 100 candidates selected by the party agency had to be women (Brichta 1977, 133). In the Herut party, the small nomination committee maintained a minimal proportion of women—one or two safe slots in total—and it seems that the issue of the representation of women did not figure prominently on the agenda during the process of candidate selection. When, for example, in 1955 the nomination committee held discussions on the integration of various social sectors to the party list, such as Mizrachi Jews, it did not mention the need for the representation of women at all (Herut 1955).

During this period Israel had "women's parties" whose main objective was to promote the status of women, and all of whose candidates were naturally women. Two all-women lists ran in the 1949 elections: "The Worker and National-Religious Women's List," which did not pass the electoral threshold; and the WIZO list, which won one seat, making it the only example to date of an all-women party to attain representation in the Knesset.

The 1970s and 1980s. Voluntary party quotas became slightly more popular during the 1970s, though they were quite modest and often were not effectively implemented. As in Northern and Western Europe, voluntary party quotas were first adopted by left-wing parties, in this case Mapam and Labor. In 1973 Mapam adopted a rule stating that of the eight slots on its list which were considered safe (in the joint Alignment list it shared with Labor), one would be reserved for a woman. This was done using the Reserved Minimal Position method (Mapam 1977). Haika

Grossman was the female representative on the list until she was replaced in 1981 by Amira Sartani. Sartani, however, held the eighth slot on the party list, and in those elections Mapam won only seven seats, leaving her outside the Knesset (Mapam 1981). In 1984, the party's central committee decided to place two women in safe slots, Grossman and Sartani, and both were elected. In 1988 a seat for a woman was reserved in one of the top four slots on the list. Amira Sartani was indeed number four on the list, but the party only won three seats (Mapam 1988).

In the Labor Party it was decided before the elections for the Ninth Knesset to ensure a 20% representation of women in all party institutions, as well as in the party's candidate list for the Knesset (Davar 1977). Accordingly, it was decided to set aside almost 20% of the first 50 slots on the list (after the chairman), which were considered safe, for women (Labor Party 1977). The system operated as follows: the party's women's organization submitted a list of 20 women to the nominating committee, and the committee was to place 10 of them in the first 50 slots on the list (Kinarty 1977). Ultimately nine women were placed in the top 50 positions, but because most of them were placed rather low on the list, only three of them got a seat in the Knesset. In the two following consecutive elections the party's quota rule was not enforced (Goldberg and Hoffman 1983, 66). In response, the women's organization threatened to petition the High Court claiming that the quota rules had been disregarded, and demanded that a woman be placed in each successive group of five candidates on the list (Kinarty 1984). Even in 1988, the party continued to ignore the rule ensuring women 20% representation (Weiss 1992), but in these elections—perhaps due to the fact that party delegates finally replaced the nomination committee in the process of candidate selection, making it impossible to ensure the representation of women on the list without gender quotas—the party reserved 9% of its "shortlist" for women.

Unlike Labor and Mapam, the NRP did not adopt any formal voluntary gender quotas, and the women of the party continued to fight

for their place in each election. Prior to the 1973 elections Tova Sanhadray was placed in the 13th slot on the party list, which was clearly unsafe. In response, the NRP women demanded that the party guarantee that any of its MKs appointed as ministers on its behalf would subsequently resign from their posts as MKs, thereby allowing Sanhadray a seat in the Knesset. They even threatened to establish an independent women's party should this demand be rejected (Nakdimon 1973a), but although their demand was indeed rejected, this threat was not carried out. In the 1977 and 1981 elections Sara Stern-Katan was placed in a safe slot, but only in 1977 was she elected to the Knesset, since in the 1981 elections the party performed poorly and lost many of its seats. Subsequently, no woman was placed in a safe slot on the NRP list for many years.

In Herut (and later on in the Likud party), which had no formal gender quotas, women continued to be represented by just two safe slots, but the issue of the representation of women gradually became more prominent in candidate selection procedures. Before the eighth general elections (1973) the issue was mentioned only in passing, as a subject to be discussed at another time (Herut, 1973). In the next elections it was proposed to reserve some slots for women on the party list, for fear that their representation would be harmed due to the transition made in the candidate selection method from a nomination committee to party delegates; however, this proposal was never discussed (Herut, 1977). Before selecting the candidates for the 11th Knesset (1984), MK Haim Corfu suggested reserving a seat for a woman in one of first 14 slots on the list (Brazil 1984). Chairman Yitzhak Shamir subsequently declared that the process of internal elections would be changed to ensure the representation of various groups on the party list, including women (Melman 1984). Ahead of the selection of candidates for the 12th Knesset (1988), female party members attempted to promote the adoption of voluntary gender quotas (Kremerman 1988), and at the 1991 Likud convention they even waved placards calling for this (Blumenthal 1991). However, the party did not take this step at that time.

The Ratz party did not introduce gender quotas in this period either. At first there was no need: Shulamit Aloni founded the party ahead of the 1973 elections, and in these elections and the ones that followed another woman was placed third on the list (in 1973 this woman was elected to the Knesset, but not in 1977). From then on, the second woman on the party list was placed lower and lower: fourth place in 1981, fifth in 1984, and seventh in 1988. In all these elections Aloni was the only woman in Ratz to win a Knesset seat.

Lastly, a Women's Party (led by Marsha Friedman, a former member of Ratz) ran in the 1977 elections, but did not pass the threshold. Additionally, the Committee on the Status of Women—which was established by government decree, and addresses a variety of issues relating to the status of women in Israel—recommended in 1978 that "the parties shall ensure the representation of women on their lists, and reserve at least 25% of the safe slots on their lists for women candidates" (Committee on the Status of Women 1978, 319). The committee saw this as only a temporary solution, until the representation of women in politics would improve.

From the 1990s to the present. During this period, voluntary gender quotas have become a common mechanism used by many parties. The research literature links this phenomenon to the transition made by many parties from exclusive candidate selection methods to more inclusive methods. Parties have adopted quotas for the representation of women as a way of maintaining the representativeness of their lists, after the leadership lost the control it once had over the candidate selection process (Rahat 2009). Table 18 presents the voluntary gender quotas adopted by Israeli parties for the period spanning the 13th (1992) through the 19th Knesset assemblies (2013). All parties presented in the table use the Reserved Minimal Position method to secure the representation of women on their lists.

Table 18: Voluntary Party Quotas in Parties Elected to the Knesset, 1992–2013

	Party*	Proportion of safe slots reserved for women (%) **	Position on the list***	Women who entered the Knesset due to the quota****	Remarks
1992	Labor Party	10	9, 18, 27, 37	1 (Yael Dayan)	
1996	Labor Party	13	9, 18, 27, 37, 40, 44	1 (Yael Dayan)	Slots number 40 and 44 were designated for women from the provinces, if women were not selected to higher slots.
1996	Meretz	20	Three women in first 13 slots	-	Each party chose a shortlist for a panel of all party members. In Ratz and Mapam specific slots were reserved for women: 4 out of 15, and 3 out of 10, respectively. In each party one woman was moved up the list due to the quota.
1996	Likud	9	13, 23, 22 (as well as 36)	-	-
1999	Labor Party	17	9, 14, 20, 26, 30, 35 (as well as 39, 45)	1 (Yael Dayan) + 1 with the resignation of an incumbent MP (Collette Avital)	-

1999	Meretz	30	One woman in first five slots, three women in first ten, and five women in first 15.	-	Meretz convention delegates were asked to select 12 candidates, including a minimum of two of each gender.
1999	Likud	11	10, 20, 30, 35 (and 40)	1 (Tzipi Livni)	-
1999	NRP	11	8	-	-
2003	Labor Party	13	10, 15, 26, 30	-	-
2003	Meretz	30	One woman in first five slots, three women in first ten, and four women in first 12.	-	Meretz convention delegates were asked to select 12 candidates, including a minimum of two of each gender.
2003	Likud	10	11, 21 (as well as 31, 36, 41)	2 (Inbal Gavriely, Lea Nass) + 1 with the resignation of an incumbent MP (Pnina Rosenblum)	Incumbent female MKs (who had previously served in the Knesset or the government) were not included in the quota.
2003	NRP	20	5	1 (Gila Finkelstein)	-
2006	Labor Party	20	5, 9, 12, 15	1 (Nadia Hilou)	-

↑

	Party*	Proportion of safe slots reserved for women (%) **		Women who entered the Knesset due to the quota****	Remarks
2006	Meretz	40	The third and fifth slots in each group of five candidates, after the party chair.	1 with the resignation of an incumbent MP (Tzvia Greenfield)	A "shortlist": the party committee chose ten candidates and ranked them. Eight slots were reserved for each gender. One male candidate was moved up to the shortlist
2006	Likud	12.5	10, 20, 24, 29, 34	1 (Limor Livnat)	A female incumbent selected to any of the first 20 slots on the party list was not included in the quota.
2006	NRP	17	5	-	-
2009	Labor Party	20	5, 9, 14, 19	-	-
2009	Meretz	40	The third and fifth slots in each group of five candidates, after the party chair.	-	A "shortlist": the party committee chose ten candidates and ranked them. Eight slots were reserved for each gender. Eventually the shortlist included only five women, most likely due to a shortage of female candidates.
2009	Likud	19	10, 20, 24, 29, 34	1 (Miri Regev)	A female incumbent selected to any of the first 20 slots on the party list was not included in the quota.

2009	Kadima	7	22, 28	2 (Rachel Adatto, Orit Zuaretz)	The quota applied only to women who chose to run separately in an all-women sector.
2009	Balad	33	One women out of every three candidates		Due to the quota there was no contest over the third slot on the list. It is therefore impossible to know if Hanin Zoabi would have been elected without it.
2013	Meretz	40	The third and fifth slots in each group of five candidates, after the party chair.	2 (Michal Rozin, Tamar Zandberg)	-
2013	Jewish Home	20	4 (as well as 8)		-
2013	Likud	13.5	10, 20, 24, 29 (as well as 34)		An incumbent female MP would not be moved up the list to the 24th, 29th and 34th positions.
2013	Labor Party	20	5, 9, 14 (as well as 19, 24)	1 (Michal Biran)	-
2013	Balad	33	One women out of every three candidates		

*   The table only presents parties that were elected to the Knesset and which reserved safe slots for women on their lists.

**   The minimum proportion of women in safe slots on the party list, as stated by gender quotas presented in the party regulations. Safe slots are defined as the number of seats the party won in the previous elections (even if the list is composed of more than one party), rounded up to the nearest multiples of five.

***   The minimal position of women on the party list, as presented in each party's candidate selection regulations. In some cases, women were eventually placed in lower positions on the list because of spots reserved for members of other parties which joined the list. No reference was made to women placed in manifestly unsafe slots (e.g., the 100th spot on the list).

**** The list does not include women who were moved up the list and were elected, but who would have been elected in any case, without the quota.

Sources: Labor Party 1992a, 1992b; Likud 1996; Labor Party 1996; Mapam 1996a, 1996b; Ratz 1996; Likud 1998, 1999; Rahat and Sher-Hadar 1998; Labor 1999; Ma'ariv 1999; The Forum for Gender Equality 1999; Meretz 1999; Shargai 1999; Ha'aretz 2002; Likud 2002; NRP 2002; Labor Party 2002a, 2002b; Meretz 2002a, 2002b; Shargai 2002; Likud 2005, 2006; Meretz-Yahad 2005; NRG Ma'ariv 2006; Labor Party 2006; Meretz-Yahad 2006; Nana 2006; Roffe-Ofir Weiss 2006; Kadima website 2008; Likud 2008a, 2008b; Yalla Kadima 2008; Labor Party 2008; Meretz-Yahad, 2008a, 2008b; Roffe-Ofir 2008; Rahat 2010; Habyit Hayehudi - New NRP 2012; Likud 2012a, 2012b, 2012b; Labor Party 2012a, 2012b; Meretz 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Nir 2012; Kempinski, 2012.

As shown in Table 18, the introduction of voluntary gender quotas in Israel is a gradual and ongoing process. Over the years, the number of parties which have adopted voluntary gender quotas has multiplied. Apart from the Zionist left-wing parties, which used gender quotas in the past as well, during the 1990s this mechanism was adopted by parties on the right and the religious right, parties in the center, and even Arab parties.

Historically we can see that, in line with the arguments found in the research literature and the comparative evidence, the adoption of voluntary gender quotas occurs in parallel with the transition to more inclusive candidate selection methods, namely party primaries (the Labor Party in 1992, Likud and Meretz in 1996, Kadima in 2009). Quotas are first adopted by political parties from the left side of

the political map, and then spread to parties in the center and on the right, although to date they are still more common in left-wing parties. It could be argued that the phenomenon of contagion, through which parties adopt voluntary gender quotas as a response to such adoption by other parties, had some influence on the adoption of gender quotas by the Likud and Meretz parties in 1996, for example. On top of that, we can see that over the years the threshold of women's representation laid down by the quotas has risen, mainly among left-wing parties such as the Labor party, where the quota reached 20%; Meretz, where it reached 40%; and Balad, in which quotas were introduced in the 2009 elections and used again in those of 2013 (33%). Notwithstanding these developments, comparatively speaking the gender quotas adopted by Israeli political parties (except Meretz and Balad) are still lower than the accepted norm in most Western countries.

In addition to the parties that appear in Table 18, other parties have also adopted voluntary gender quotas. Since 1992, the issue of gender quotas for women has been on the agenda of the Hadash party (Rouhana, Shehadeh, and Sbaa'-Khuri 2010, 159), and since 1999 the party reserves three of the top ten slots on its list for women. However, this hardly has any effect on the number of women chosen for the Knesset by the party, as the quota does not address the location of women on the party list, and allows placing women in what are considered "unsafe" slots. In 1999, Tamar Gozansky was placed in a safe slot, and was elected to Knesset; in 2003, a female candidate was placed in a semi-safe slot (that is, a slot that the party might conceivably win, but with no great degree of certainty), and was not elected; and ever since then, the party has not placed any women candidates in safe slots. Towards the 2013 elections the pressure to reserve a seat for a woman in Hadash and in Maki (the main party in the alliance of parties forming Hadash) grew, and the Hadash council passed a decision to work towards having a woman serving as an MK from the Hadash party in the next Knesset term (Israeli Communist Party 2012a). Eventually the party committee

the appointment of candidates by the party chairman (according to the recommendations of the party members) with a quota of at least 40% representation for each gender in each successive group of five candidates on its list (after the chairman). The party, which has never passed the electoral threshold, implemented these rules (at least for its top five slots) in the elections of 1999, 2003, and 2006. However, in the 2009 elections only one woman was placed among the first five candidates after the party chair (she was third on the list) (Green Party Rules of Procedure, for the environment and the quality of life in Israel: Sections 661, 761), and in the 2013 elections not a single woman was placed among the first five candidates. Also noteworthy is the Eretz Chadasha party, which used the zipper method to alternate male and female candidates on its list for the 2013 elections (the candidates were selected by the party leader).

As before, in parties which use a nomination committee to select their candidates for the Knesset (even if formal approval is required from the party convention or central committee) the nominating institution—usually the party leader or a small nomination committee—can appoint women to the party list at its discretion. Yisrael Beytenu is the most prominent example: in most of the election races in which the party has competed (since 1999), the first woman on its list was placed in the fifth place, although the proportion of women in lower positions was quite high. Consequently, in 1999 and 2003, when the party won three and four seats (respectively), not a single woman was elected to the Knesset. But in 2006 and 2009, with the party's electoral success, three and five women (respectively) entered the Knesset on its behalf. Before the 2013 elections the party list included a woman in fourth place and, as in previous elections, five women in total in the first 15 places. The party had 11 representatives in that Knesset term, three of whom were women. Similarly, in the Am Echad party, chairman Amir Peretz ensured the representation of women at the top of the list prior to the 2003 elections (as opposed to the 1999 elections, when not a single

rejected the proposal to reserve a safe slot on the party list for a woman (Shaalan 2012). As before, three women were placed on the first ten slots on the party list; however, all were placed in unsafe slots (5, 8, and 10) and none of them was elected to the Knesset (Israeli Communist Party 2012b). The first two candidates on the party list have promised, partially in order to please those who called for the introduction of party quotas, to resign from the Knesset after two years in order to allow for the woman candidate, who was fifth on the list, to enter the Knesset (ibid.).

Even parties that did not pass the electoral threshold have adopted formal voluntary gender quotas. In 1999, Haderech Hashlishit committed to having a woman in one of the first five slots on its list; however, during the candidate selection process Miriam David won the fifth place on the party list without the quota being used (Haderech Hashlishit 1999a; 1999b). Earlier, in 1996, the party did not adopt gender quotas and the nomination committee placed Amira Perlov in the seventh slot on the party list, a decision later reinforced by the party delegates who also participated in the nomination process. This turned out to be too low a position for her to be elected to the Knesset (Golan 1996a, 1996b).

Prior to the 2009 elections the Green Movement reserved the third, fifth, and ninth slots on its list for women candidates (Green Movement 2008a). Ultimately in the party primaries four women were elected to the first top ten slots and held the third, fifth, eighth, and ninth positions, although they were eventually pushed further down the list when the party united its list with that of Meimad (Green Movement 2008b). Before the 2013 elections it was determined that two people, a man and a woman, would jointly serve as the party chair and would hold the top two slots on the list. In the party primaries women were selected to the second, third, fourth and sixth slots, without the need for any quota (Green Movement 2012a; 2012b). Eventually, the party did not run independently in the elections. The Green party combines

woman was placed in a safe slot): a woman was placed in the second place (and got elected to the Knesset) and in the fifth place (and was not elected to the Knesset). In the Yesh Atid party four women were placed in the top ten slots on the party list for the 19th Knesset (3, 7, 9, and 10). In the event, the party won 19 seats, eight of which were filled by women. By contrast, in the Kadima party the first woman was placed only in the fifth slot on the party list, which was considered unsafe according to the election polls (after the resignation of Zeev Bielski, she was moved up to the fourth place on the list) (Yalla Kadima 2012). Prior to those same elections the first woman on the Hatnua party list after Tzipi Livni was placed only in the ninth slot, which was not necessarily safe according to the polls, and indeed she was not elected to the Knesset. Lastly, an all-women's party ran for election during this period too. This was in the 1992 elections, and the first man on the party list was placed at the ninth slot. Like its predecessors, this party did not pass the electoral threshold.

The numerical contribution of voluntary gender quotas to the representation of women during this period is quite a modest one. It is true that this contribution grew in the years up to the 2009 elections, although the growth was halted in the 2013 elections. In 1992 and in 1996 the quotas led to the election of one additional woman MK; in 2009, however, they led to the election of four additional women MKs (assuming Hanin Zoabi would not have been elected to Knesset without the quota), and in 2013 to the election of three additional MKs. The relative contribution of the quotas to the proportion of women in the Knesset also increased gradually before dropping again in the 2013 elections. In 1992 the quotas accounted for 9% of the women elected to the Knesset; in 2009 they accounted for 19%; and then in 2013 for only 11%.

All in all, up until 2009 there is a clear gradual increase in the contribution of quotas to the representation of women, but it has remained a rather modest contribution overall. The decrease in the contribution of voluntary party gender quotas to the representation of

women evident since 2013 can be attributed to two developments. First, the increased use of exclusive candidate selection methods, through which the representation of women can be ensured without the need for quotas. A prime example is that of the eight female MKs elected to parliament by the Yesh Atid party, approximately 42% of the party's representatives in the Knesset, without the use of quotas. Second, in many parties that adopted quotas it turned out that there was no need to use them, as women were selected to the minimal places allocated for them on the party list without the quotas being deployed. This was the case in parties such as the Likud, the Jewish Home, and Balad.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that the quotas have achieved their goal. Although the proportion of women in the 19th Knesset is the highest it has ever been (22.5%), it is still rather low, and quotas have the potential to increase it, as we shall now discuss.

First, let us examine those parties which used democratic candidate selection methods to select their candidates for the 19th Knesset. In the Likud, the Jewish Home and even the Labor party gender quotas are still quite low, as is the representation of women among their Knesset members. It is possible that in order to increase the representation of women among the MKs of these parties they should adopt higher voluntary quotas. Another party which uses a democratic candidate selection method, and therefore can adopt voluntary gender quotas, is Maki (or Hadash), which today (the 19th Knesset) has no women MK serving in the Knesset on its behalf. As for Meretz, while the party does not need to raise its quota rate (40%), since two out of its three women MKs were elected due to the quota, it is not advisable for the party to revoke its quota provision just yet. (Recommendations concerning voluntary party gender quotas will appear in the next section.)

In quite a few parties which use exclusive candidate selection methods, mainly the ultra-Orthodox and Arab parties, there is no representation of women whatsoever. In the 2013 elections these parties were Agudat Israel, United Torah Judaism, Shas, Ta'al, Ra'am

(United Arab list), and Kadima, which in the past did have female Knesset members. In view of their history and their political culture, it is unlikely that these parties (other than Kadima) will adopt voluntary gender quotas for women, and therefore it is possible that the only way to encourage them to integrate women in their lists is to enact legislated gender quotas. The representation of women in other parties which use exclusive candidate selection method is fairly low as well. In the Hatnua party it is 17%, and even in Yisrael Beytenu it has decreased to 27%. The adoption of legislated quotas for the representation of women is especially likely to affect these parties, which share a more egalitarian political culture, as it will spur them to attempt to comply with the quota law even if the only incentive offered is a financial reward. (A recommendation concerning this type of quota will appear in the next section as well.)

Analysis of the recent elections indicates that there are only two parties in which there is no need for quotas: Balad and Yesh Atid. Balad has a reasonable proportion of 33% women among its MKs, achieved without having to deploy its quota system (which also sets a rate of 33% representation). Adopting a higher quota rate of 40% representation is of course desirable, but meaningless for a party which has never won more than three seats. However, in the future the party may need the quota, as it is unclear if a woman other than the charismatic Hanin Zoabi will succeed in being elected for a safe slot on the party list otherwise. In Yesh Atid, the proportion of women is fairly high due to the use of an exclusive candidate selection method.

An effective use of gender quotas for the representation of women is necessary, therefore, to raise the low proportion of women in the Knesset, or even to maintain its current level.

Bill Proposals for the Adoption of Legislated Gender Quotas

Over the last two decades more than twenty Private Members' Bills for the adoption of legislated gender quotas in Israel have been put forward. We can divide the bills submitted into two main types: (1) Bills seeking to disqualify candidate lists which do not include a minimal representation of both men and women; (2) Bills offering a financial reward to those candidate lists in which the representation of women is relatively high.

Disqualification of party lists which do not meet the quota. Such bills sought to rule that candidate lists which do not include a minimal proportion of candidates from both genders, or which do not meet the rules regarding the location of such candidates on the party list, will be disqualified from the running in the elections. These proposals are similar to the legal quotas used in countries such as Belgium, Spain, Poland, Slovenia and Costa Rica. In general, we can say that when these types of bills were proposed in the 1990s they were rather mild, with most of them addressing only the proportion of women on the list, and not their location on it. A proposed bill from 1994, for example, obligated any list with more than four candidates to include at least 25% of candidates from each gender. However, a reservation was made stating that parties that declare before the Regulator of Political Parties that such a law contradicts their platform would still be able to run in the elections (Political Parties Bill [Amendment: ensuring representation] 1994). Other proposed bills obligated party lists to include at least 33% of candidates from each gender.[30] A different proposal from 1997 provides an example of the opposite, as

30   Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation of both genders) 1994b; Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation of both genders) 1996, P/8; Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation of both genders) 1999, P/17.

it determines the location of women on the list but not their proportion among the party candidates. Under this proposal, any list with more than five candidates would be obliged to present at least one candidate from each gender in the first four places on the list.[31]

The bills put forward from 2000 onwards were more comprehensive and demanding. Firstly, the proposals addressed both the proportion of women on the list and their location on it; secondly, they called for a higher quota. A significant portion of the proposals demanded that every list include at least 40% of candidates from each gender—two in each successive group of five candidates.[32] Another proposal set a similar requirement, but permitted deviation from it providing that the party states in writing that gender equality is against its worldview (Political Parties Bill [Amendment: Ensuring representation] 2001b, P/3065). Other suggestions demanded a lower rate of candidates from each gender (30%), with at least three candidates from each gender in in each successive group of ten candidates, and at least one candidate from each gender in each successive group of five candidates.[33]

Financial rewards for lists and factions which meet the quota. Such bills were first proposed in the Knesset in 2002. Unlike the previous type of bill, these do not stipulate the general representation rate of candidates from each gender; rather, they address the representation of

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31 Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation) 1997 P/1741; Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation) 1999, P/322.

32 Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation), 2008, P/3292; Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation) 2007, P/2938; Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation) 2003, P/1; Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation) 2001, P/3168.

33 Elections for the Knesset and Government Bill (Amendment: Fair representation of both sexes) 2001, P/2573. A similar proposal demanded 33% representation for women, by placing a female candidate in each successive group of three candidates (Knesset Elections Bill [Amendment: Fair representation of women in the elections] 2012, P/3939).

women specifically, as they wish to reward parties for selecting women to serve as MKs on their behalf. It is important to note that in Israel, as in other countries, there are two separate mechanisms for financing political parties—current expenditure financing and election financing—and most of the proposed bills addressed only the second mechanism.

The first proposals of this type addressed the party's eligibility for additional funding based on the composition of its candidate list. In order to receive the funding, the party would have to meet requirements for the proportion and the location of women on its list. However, the actual compensation was to be determined by the composition of the faction (the party in the Knesset): for every female candidate elected to Knesset it was proposed that the party receive an additional funding unit or two. Most of the proposals demanded that parties have at least two women in every six candidates, that is, a 33% quota.[34] Another proposal required parties to include at least two women in every five candidates, a 40% quota.[35]

In subsequent proposals only the composition of the party faction eventually elected to the Knesset—and not the candidate lists—were addressed. According to most of the proposals, a Knesset faction would be eligible for additional funding if at least 30% of its members are women, regardless of the composition of its list of candidates and the location of women on it. According to these proposals too, parties meeting the conditions would receive additional funding, although the added value for each female candidate in these bills was set for

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34   Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2002, P/3738; Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2003, P/182; Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2003a, P/184; Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2003b, P/646.

35   Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2004, P/1770.

half a funding unit.[36] Interestingly, the government also took steps to table a similar bill. In 2002, the Ministerial Committee on the Status of Women recommended to the government that it promote legislation to increase the funding allocated to factions comprising more than 30% women (without specifying the extent or composition of the funding). The committee authorized the then Justice Minister Meir Shitrit to draft a bill accordingly (Ben-David 2005; Nahari 2002). However, this proposal was never advanced toward legislation. Another bill proposed increasing not only the election funding, but also the funding for regular expenditures, for factions with at least 30% women.[37] The most recent proposal devised, in July 2012, described an entirely different mechanism. All factions with at least 35% women would be collectively allocated NIS 5.5 million, and this amount divided between them according to the proportion of women in each faction. The proposal also stated that the validity of the law would expire once the representation of women in the Knesset exceeds a 40% threshold.[38]

The sponsors and co-sponsors of the above-mentioned bills span the entire Israeli political spectrum: the non-Zionist left (Balad, Ra'am, Ta'al, Hadash), the Zionist left (Meretz, Labor), the center (Kadima, Shinui, Gil, Haatzma'ut), the secular right (Likud, Yisrael Beytenu), and the religious right (NRP, Ichud Leumi). While it is true that at first MKs from Meretz and the Labor party were more prominent in sponsoring such bills, in the last decade it is difficult to identify a faction which stands out in this regard, although the ultra-Orthodox parties are

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36 Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2007, P/2398; Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2007a, P/2594; Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2009, P/203.

37 Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2005, P/3671.

38 Party Finance Bill (Amendment: encouraging representation of both genders), 2010, P/2172.

prominent in their objection to these bills, and the religious right does little to advance them. It should also be noted that many of the bills are the product of a collaboration between Knesset members from several factions, and sometimes even from different political camps. Most of the bills' sponsors have been women, but there are also some men who have sponsored, or co-sponsored, them. As already noted, none of these bills was ever enacted into legislation. Most of them were never put to a Knesset vote, or were rejected at the preliminary reading stage. The Political Parties Bill (Amendment: Ensuring representation) 2007, the Party Finance Bill (Amendment 29: Encouraging representation of both genders) 2005, and the Party Finance Bill (Amendment: Encouraging representation of both genders) 2007 were the only bills to pass the preliminary reading; however, they were not then advanced any further. It should be noted that the 2007 bill, sponsored by MKs Gideon Saar and Zahava Gal-On, had 46 co-sponsors.

According to the report of the Knesset's legal advisors, who discussed the Party Finance Bill (Amendment: Encouraging representation of both genders) 2005, any decision to adopt legal gender quotas—especially a law that increases the election finance of factions—requires the support of 61 Knesset members. Such a law conflicts, they say, with one of the principles of the Basic Law: The Knesset (Section 4), which says, "The Knesset shall be elected by . . . equal elections." In accordance with the limitation clause in that article, a change made to this principle requires the support of 61 Knesset members. This opinion is based on the premise that the "equality" discussed in the Knesset Basic Law refers to each candidate list having an equal chance of being elected to the Knesset, and that reducing party funding (in relative terms)— which would be the outcome for parties ideologically opposed to the integration of women in politics, and therefore unable to comply with the quota law—is tantamount to harming the election prospects of a list. While it is true that the state has the right to encourage ends it perceives as desirable through party finance, and therefore the proposal

is not unconstitutional, it still conflicts with the principle of equality. In a contrasting report, Professor Suzie Navot contended that the bill does not violate the principle of equality. Her opinion is that the proposed law specifically promotes the principle of affirmative action for women, and therefore helps to promote equality. In response the Knesset's legal advisors argued that the principle of equality in the Basic Law: The Knesset is not a general principle which covers equality between individuals; rather, it applies only to the equality between lists of candidates running in the Knesset elections. Moreover, they argued that even if the law does apply to individual candidates, it still applies to the lists of candidates as well, and therefore in any case the proposed bill is in conflict with the principle of equality (Knesset 2005).[39]

Aside from these bills, which address the adoption of gender quotas for party lists and factions, other legislative proposals have been submitted for the adoption of quotas in different political institutions. Prominent examples are bills for the adoption of gender quotas for the government (Basic Law: The Government [Amendment: Fair representation] 1999); for party selectorates; in parties which do not use primaries (Political Parties Bill [Amendment: Ensuring representation in the selection institutions] 2003); and for candidate lists in local authority elections (Municipal Cooperation Ordinance Bill (Elections) [Amendment: fair representation of women in Municipal elections] 2011).

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39 The Knesset's legal advisors and Professor Navot were also divided on whether the limitation clause that appears in the Basic Law: The Knesset presents a formal limitation, requiring a majority of 61 Knesset Members to pass a law to overcome it (as claimed by some of the Knesset's legal advisors), or a substantive limitation, in which case it is possible to approve the law even without such a majority, if it is found to be compatible with other legal principles (as claimed by Professor Navot).

4. Gender Quotas for Women: Discussion

The debate between those in favor of gender quotas for women and those against revolves around the following issues:

A. **Descriptive Representation.** As we have seen, gender quotas generally have a positive impact on the proportion of women in parliament. However, the impact attained by legislated and voluntary party quotas depends greatly on the accompanying rules and procedures, on the support the quotas receive from influential political actors, and on various electoral characteristics. Thus in some cases quotas may result in only a negligible increase in the percentage of women in parliament.

According to another argument, the adoption of low-rate quotas may raise the proportion of women in parliament in the short term, but will lead to long-term stagnation, as women's representation will not exceed the (low) threshold set by the quota. The reason is that incumbent female MPs will be repeatedly reselected using the quota, while new female candidates will be disadvantaged in comparison (and relative to male candidates), and will therefore be unable to get elected for parliament. Moreover, even if there were to be real competition between new female candidates and incumbent female MPs, it would be limited to those places allocated for women by the quotas, and therefore there would be no further increase in the proportion of women in parliament. Consequently, in order to increase the proportion of women in parliament the rate set by the quota must be relatively high, or it must grow gradually. Alternatively, it is possible to limit the use of quotas in favor of new candidates, or of incumbent MPs who have served for one term only (Rahat 2009).

B. **Substantive Representation.** The key question in this regard is whether female members of parliament elected due to gender quotas will indeed further the interests of women, and represent their views, in their parliamentary activity. In the previous chapter, we answered

this question in the affirmative. However, some scholars argue that, due to the objection held by many MPs to gender quotas, female MPs elected through this mechanism can be expected to be excluded from the power bases of parliament. Moreover, they are likely to be weaker, more dependent, and more loyal to their party leaders than are women who do not owe their election to quotas. These scholars argue that party leaders will take advantage of the quotas in order to elect women who will be subordinate to them in parliament. As a result, women elected by quotas are not expected to act independently on issues such as the status of women, in contrast to women elected without recourse to quotas.[40] This argument is particularly prominent in countries which have adopted gender quotas without a corresponding improvement in the overall status of women in society: these quota women are expected to be particularly weak and dependent on men politicians (Diaz 2005, 82).

Scholars who deny these claims hold that there are no significant differences between women elected to parliament by quotas and those elected regardless of them. They believe that the dependence of junior MPs on senior ones is a general phenomenon in parliament, and is not unique to women elected by gender quotas. Additionally, the main struggle of incumbent male MPs against gender quotas is conducted during the candidate selection process; once women are elected to parliament, however, they are not specifically excluded from its power bases (Zetterberg 2008). Moreover, in some cases quota women may be more powerful with respect to the party, compared to women elected without quotas—the imposition of legal quotas grants women candidates leverage, as the party needs women to fulfill the legal requirements of the quotas (Diaz 2005, 101).

C. **Intra-party Conflicts.** Some claim that the adoption of gender quotas is expected to result in serious conflicts within the party. Such

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40   For a debate on this issue, see Zetterberg 2008.

conflicts are particularly likely to occur between the party's central organization and its branches in the provinces or in different sectors, since the latter will be concerned that the imposition of quotas will come at their expense and harm their autonomy. Additionally, incumbent MPs are expected to oppose the quotas, again because of concern that an influx of women will come at their expense. On the other hand, proponents of quotas argue that these confrontations will only be temporary, and that eventually the intra-party actors will accept the quotas, even though the autonomy of the provinces and sectors will indeed be somewhat reduced (Dahlerup 1998, 94; Diaz 2005, 103). At times intra-party actors have opposed the adoption of gender quotas by arguing that these will harm the party electorally, especially if the elections are held in single-member districts, in which women have lower chances of winning. This was the argument made by UK Labour politicians regarding the all-women shortlist mechanism. However, empirical studies have questioned these claims (Cutts and Widdop 2012).

D. **Normative Aspects.** Some argue that the quota system compromises the principles of liberal democracy. They violate the principle of equal opportunities and competitiveness because they provide an advantage for women over men in the race for a seat in parliament, and they undermine the right of citizens to freely choose their favorite MPs (Dahlerup 1998, 94). Conversely, quotas proponents argue that in today's circumstances women encounter significant informal obstacles that keep them from being elected to parliament, and that these obstacles harm the principle of equal opportunities for women and the competitiveness of the political system. The purpose of gender quotas is to remove those obstacles and create a level playing field for both men and women, and thus quotas actually increase the equality of opportunities and the competitiveness of the system (Dahlerup 1998, 94; Diaz 2005; Jalalzai and Krook 2010). Additionally, they argue that because it is the parties that determine the identity of the

candidates for parliament, and not the general public, the introduction of gender quotas does not affect the freedom of choice of the public (Dahlerup 1998, 94). Nevertheless, some quota proponents argue that quotas are normatively justifiable only as a temporary measure to promote competition and equality between the sexes, and should be revoked once these goals are achieved (Rahat 2009, 85).

The normative arguments against the adoption of gender quotas have also increased due to the legal proceedings conducted against them. In 1995, for example, Italy's constitutional court disqualified the legislated party quotas adopted by both chambers of the Italian legislature a short time earlier. The court's argument was that the quotas contradicted the constitutional provision under which all citizens are entitled to equal access to public office. In response, the relevant section in the constitution was amended, and now includes a requirement for the state to promote equal opportunities for women and men. Consequently, the quotas adopted later on for the elections to the European Parliament were not disqualified (Ben-David 2005). Similarly, in the UK the courts disqualified the all-women shortlist on the grounds that it contradicted existing sexual discrimination legislation (the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act). In response, Parliament enacted new legislation stating that candidate selection procedures which distinguish between candidates based on their gender, in order to reduce inequality between men and women, would not be considered sexual discrimination.[41] This law enabled the Labour Party to re-introduce quotas. In Israel, as stated above, Knesset legal advisors have expressed an opinion that the adoption of party gender quotas, which would allocate extra funding to factions with a higher proportion of women, conflicts with the principle of equality in the Basic Law: The Knesset, and therefore can only be approved by a majority of 61 Knesset members.

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41   The law in question—The Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act 2002—is a temporary law due to expire in 2015, unless extended.

These three cases demonstrate that although gender quotas may conflict with constitutional principles, they are not unconstitutional by definition. As a result, their adoption is possible, with the appropriate legal adaptations.

E. **Party Autonomy.** The traditional approach in political science holds that parties are voluntary and autonomous social institutions, and that therefore the state should not intervene in their selection of candidates. Recently, however, this idea has been challenged by an alternative viewpoint according to which the state has the right, or even the obligation, to intervene in the internal conduct of parties, due to this conduct's important democratic ramifications. Many democracies are now increasing state regulation on political parties, with regard both to the integration of women and minorities in the party and to other aspects of party life, such as the proper conduct of the candidate selection process (Hazan and Rahat 2010, 3–4). One of the main normative arguments backing these developments is that states are now gradually increasing their financial support of political parties. Consequently, the state increasingly has the authority and responsibility to regulate them and to intervene in their activities, in order to promote its desirable normative goals (Van Biezen and Kopecký 2007; Hofnung 2008; Hazan and Rahat 2010). This argument is particularly relevant in the case of legislated gender quotas which impose a fine on parties that do not meet the quotas, or alternatively which financially reward those parties that do. This type of quota is justified because it allows parties that oppose the representation of women in principle to choose not to comply with the quota. Thus it may provoke less objection from such parties, and be accepted more easily.

F. **Impact on the Quality of MPs.** Some argue that the use of gender quotas may relegate qualified male candidates and thus impair the quality of MPs overall. Conversely, quota advocates argue that the current situation, in which women find it highly difficult to get into

parliament, has just that effect, by making it difficult for talented women to serve as MPs. According to this view, the use of quotas to promote the representation of women in parliament will help these talented women to get elected, and thus will actually improve the overall quality of MPs (Dahlerup 1998, 94).

G. **Symbolic Impact.** According to the proponents of quotas, the adoption of gender quotas by the state serves as an explicit declaration that women are equal to men in terms of their skills and their ability to contribute. This step can have a positive impact on the status of women elsewhere in society, for example in the workplace, regardless of the immediate impact of quotas on the representation of women in parliament (Murray 2012). On the other hand, critics claim that the adoption of gender quotas has not been shown to have real impact on advancing the status of women in society (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2010, 410). According to another view, the introduction of quotas by the state can have a positive effect on the status of women only in those countries which have already seen some improvement in their status, which is particularly true in Europe. However, in countries where the state has instituted quotas without any improvement occurring in the status of women in society—especially the case in Africa and Asia—it is indeed a superficial, ineffectual step (Diaz 2005, 82).

H. **Effect on Other Sectors of Society.** Some argue that adopting quotas for women's representation may promote the representation (in politics and elsewhere) of other groups in society, such as ethnic minorities.[42] By contrast, other scholars believe that the adoption of gender quotas will result in too many other groups in society—in fact, in an endless list of such groups—all demanding similar mechanisms for their increased representation. Consequently, it may lead to the entire political system focusing excessively on particularistic interests at the expense of general ones (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2010, 410).

42   For a study making this claim regarding France, see Murray 2012.

In conclusion, quotas are an acceptable, efficient, and normatively-justified means to improve the representation of women in parliament. It seems their use is most effective and justified in countries where the status of women in society is well-established, but their representation in parliament is still low. In these countries quotas may lead both to an improved representation of women in the parliament and to further improvements in the overall status of women in society. However, even here gender quotas may not achieve their goals. To safeguard quotas and their aims, it is important to ensure the existence and enforcement of accompanying rules and procedures that make it difficult for parties to shirk their obligations. It is also desirable to adopt higher quotas, quotas which gradually increase, or quotas intended for new candidates only. To deflect opposition to the quotas on a normative basis, it should be made clear that the quotas are to be only temporary, and that they will be revoked as soon as the desired representation for women in parliament is achieved. Finally, employing procedures that significantly cut funding to parties which do not meet the quota, while still allowing them to run for parliament, may strengthen the normative justification for legal party quotas, and improve the chances of their being adopted.

Chapter Five
Summary and Recommendations

This policy paper has presented a comprehensive overview of the representation of women in the central Israeli political arenas, particularly in the Knesset. We have seen that the proportion of women in the Knesset is indeed on the rise, but still amounts to less than a quarter. Also, Israel lags behind most OECD countries in terms of female representation in parliament, and even more so in terms of female representation in government.

We have also characterized two types of parties operating in the Israeli parliamentary system. The first type consists of those which completely exclude women, and present no female candidates. The second type are those which have been open to women. Some of these parties—especially those which have democratized their candidate selection process—have adopted mechanisms to ensure a minimum representation for women. Such mechanisms have increased the representation of women in the Knesset over the last decade, and as a result have influenced the issues and character of the parliamentary agenda, as described in Chapter Three.

As considerable as the improvement in the representation of women in the Knesset over the last decade has been, it is not enough. Indeed, part of the reason why this improvement seems so significant is its very low starting point: the representation of women in the first 14 Knesset assemblies (up to and including the 1996 elections) was at an average of 9.5%. From such a low point improvement is essential, yet at its current level it should not be considered sufficient. Also, it should not be forgotten that in spite of the improvement in the representation of

women in the Knesset, the representation of women in government remains low. The safest way to bring about significant change in this central arena of decision making and policy formation is to increase the representation of women in the Knesset.

Finally, we believe that a more pronounced presence of women in the Knesset is important from a political and cultural perspective. The visibility of female politicians has an important added value for democracy in Israel, especially in light of the alarming phenomenon of the exclusion of women from public spaces, examples of which have gained public prominence in recent times. Consequently, we present below several alternatives of institutional apparatuses designed to increase the representation of women in the Knesset.

1. The Adoption of Voluntary Party Quotas

First, we recommend that all political parties in Israel adopt, as part of their constitutions or bylaws, voluntary party quotas for the representation of women. This mechanism, as we have seen, is common in many political parties in the democratic world (see Table 15 above) and in most of the parties operating in Israel today (see Table 18 above), and is a common measure for raising the proportion of women serving in parliament. It should be noted that since this is a voluntary mechanism, it is our intention that it should be one that parties are able and willing to adopt. Thus we recommend that parties in Israel take these steps:

- Determine that the proportion of candidates from each gender in the party list of candidates for the Knesset will be at least 40%. It is of course possible to institute a lower quota rate; however, this rate is not excessive. Similar and even higher quotas are common among many parties worldwide. The level of representation of women in three of the factions in the 19th

Knesset's meets this proposed quota, but does not greatly exceed it: 50% in Meretz; 42% in Yesh Atid; and 33% in Balad. The adoption of lower quotas could eventually lead to a stagnation in female representation in parliament.

- Determine that in each successive group of five candidates (1–5, 6–10 and so on) there will be at least two candidates from each gender. Rules addressing the ranking of women on the party list are very important, because without them women could very well be pushed down the list to low and unsafe slots. To illustrate the importance of this regulation we present Figure 11. The diagram presented in the figure simulates a party which is expected to win ten seats according to the election polls and must reserve 40% of the slots on its list for female candidates. The diagram presents the party's first 20 candidates on the list; blue symbolizes a male candidate and green symbolizes a female one.

The first scenario presents a situation in which the party meets the quota: eight out of its 20 candidates are women (40%). Nevertheless, it is clear that the chances of the female candidates to be elected are slim, given that they are located in slots considered highly unsafe: the 13th slot or lower. Presumably, then, in that case, even though the party has placed 40% women on its list, it is most likely to be represented in the Knesset solely by male MKs. The second scenario illustrates a situation in which the representation of women exceeds the quota, as we have an equal representation of ten female candidates and ten male candidates. However, if we take into account that there are only ten safe slots, it appears that only two women (20%) will actually be elected to parliament. The third option is the one proposed here: in each successive group of five candidates there will be at least two candidates from each gender. This will ensure that within the first ten slots on the party list, which are considered safe, there will be a minimal representation of 40% women.

Figure 11: A 40% Gender Quota for a Party Expected to Win 10 Seats in the Elections

Location on the candidate list	First Scenario	Second Scenario	Third Scenario
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

- In parties which select their candidates for the Knesset using inclusive selectorates (that is, through primaries or through some sort of partisan institution numbering hundreds or thousands of members), we recommend using the "Reserved Minimal Position" method. According to this method men and women compete against each other directly, and only if one of the groups—be it males or females—does not receive the minimum representation reserved, its members are moved up the list. This is the method currently used by parties in Israel, and is the only one that can help prevent the stagnation in female representation in parliament mentioned above: in the

other two methods for reserving slots for women, specific slots are pre-allocated, creating a de-facto situation in which the same women compete for the same fixed slots, so that no new women are elected and the representation of women on the list does not increase. The Reserved Minimal Position method is also the only one which allows us to objectively test the effect of quotas: to determine whether women were elected on their own or because they were moved up the list. Naturally this recommendation is not relevant for parties using more exclusive candidate selection methods. In these parties the selectorate will have to ensure the implementation of quotas.

- Establish that the quotas will be adopted gradually. The exact mechanism depends on the particular situation of each party. In Balad, for example, where the quota now stands on 33%, it could be raised immediately to 40%; however, a party that has never adopted quotas could first adopt a 20% quota, and gradually raise it by 5% in every subsequent election campaign. A gradual increase in quotas is one of the tools that prevent stagnation in the representation of women, encouraging new female candidates to run for office and helping them get elected. However, this recommendation requires thoughtful consideration. Sometimes parties encounter a window of opportunity that allows them to raise the quota immediately and significantly; they should be encouraged to take advantage of it. For example, in the case of a new party or a party expected to win substantial electoral gains in the coming elections, it is easier to adopt higher quotas from the start, because there are no incumbents to oppose them for fear of losing their place on the list.

- Determine that the quotas will be revoked if not activated—that is, if it transpires to be unnecessary to move women up the list— for two consecutive elections. This proposal has a normative

importance, since quotas are designed to be a temporary measure to promote equality, and therefore should be canceled once this goal has been achieved. This recommendation is not relevant for parties that use exclusive methods of selecting their candidates, for which it is impossible to evaluate the success of quotas.

2. The Adoption of Legislated (Mandatory) Party Quotas

In addition to the recommendations made with regard to parties, we suggest considering the adoption of legislated party quotas in Israel. As we have seen, this mechanism is used in an increasing number of democratic states. Several bills promoting this agenda have been proposed in the Knesset since the 1990s.

It should be emphasized that we do not recommend adopting the type of legislated quotas which ban parties that do not meet the quota from standing for election. This is because the legality of such sanctions is questionable. It is also unlikely that this kind of proposal would be accepted in Israel, where some of the parties refuse to include women on their lists as a matter of principle. Instead, we suggest using party financing in order to distinguish between the lists which meet the quota and those which do not, as is common in countries such as France, Portugal, and Croatia. It is also important to note that our recommendation that parties adopt voluntary quotas does not contradict our recommendation for the state to adopt legislated quotas: indeed, we recommend that parties adopt voluntary quotas which are higher than those adopted by the state (40% versus 30%). The purpose of this higher voluntary party quota is, firstly, to encourage parties to meet the quota set by the state and receive the additional party finance; and secondly, to increase the proportion of women in the parties and the Knesset beyond the mandatory quota, and thus to contribute to the promotion of gender equality.

We therefore recommend the following:

- Amending the Political Parties (Financing) Law 5733–1973, so that it will provide different financing prerogatives for parties which meet the quota and for those which do not. According to the 2005 opinion of Knesset legal advisors, the approval of such an amendment requires that an absolute majority of 61 Knesset members vote in favor of it.

- Contrary to accepted practice in France and Portugal, but in accordance with previous bills proposed in Israel and accepted practice in Croatia, we recommend adding surplus party funding which will be allocated among factions which meet the quota, rather than reducing the party finance of factions which do not meet them. Although the difference between a fine and a bonus in not substantive in this matter, the first option is likely to be less controversial.

- In order for a faction to be eligible for additional party finance, its list of candidates should include: a) at least three candidates from each gender in each successive group of ten candidates (1–10, 11–20 and so on);[43] b) at least 30% of candidates from each gender in safe slots, i.e., those won by the party in the previous election; c) at least one candidate from each gender among the first five candidates.[44] This quota combines

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43 We offer the following calculation: first we review the first ten candidates on the list and check whether they include at least three from each gender; then we review the first 20 candidates and see if they include at least six from each gender; and so forth. The reason is simple: if we do not adopt this calculation method, a party which has four women in the first ten spots and two women in the next ten spot would (unjustifiably) fail to meet the quota. In contrast, according to the suggested calculation method this party will meet the quota, as it should.

44 In the legislative amendment it will be necessary to address many individual cases, for example, how to calculate the number of safe slots for factions which split or merged during the previous Knesset term, or the quota requirements for

restrictions for the proportion of women on the party list with restrictions for their ranking on the list, especially in top positions—a combination which is essential for the success of the quota. In our opinion this is a reasonable quota. Similar quotas or higher have been adopted in democratic countries around the world, and have been proposed in Israel. Spain, for example, adopted a higher quota of 40% of candidates from each gender in safe slots, and a requirement to place two candidates from each gender in each successive group of five candidates; in Portugal the quota is slightly lower and stands at 33%, with an accompanying requirement to place at least one candidate from each gender in each successive group of three candidates; in Argentina the quota is similar— at least 30% from each gender in safe slots, and at least one candidate from each gender in the first two or three slots on the list; in Brazil the quota stands at 30%, but there are no rules regarding the ranking of women in the list. Additionally, even though Meretz and Yesh Atid are the only factions in the 19th Knesset that already meet this quota, other factions, especially Labor and Balad, and to a lesser extent the joint faction of the Jewish Home and Ichud Leumi, are not far from it. Hence it is reasonable to assume that if such a quota were to be legislated these parties would make an effort to meet its requirements. As in the case with our previous recommendation, here too we suggest that the quota address "each gender," and not specifically women.

- Contrary to accepted practice in France and Portugal, but in accordance with previous bills proposed in Israel and the accepted practice in Croatia, we suggest that the amount of

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lists with fewer than ten candidates. We cannot address all these issues in the current study.

surplus party financing allocated to factions should be based on the post-election proportion of women, and not on the proportion of women on the party's candidate list. In other words, the level of funding is determined by the composition of the faction in the Knesset de facto: as the number of women in the faction grows the funding is increased, reaching its maximum when the faction has 50% women. This will encourage parties to exceed the minimum rate required by the quota, and to strive to raise the proportion of women in safe slots on their list up to 50%, as a way to maximize their party financing. In this manner, we can also avoid stagnation in the representation of women.

- The specific mechanism according to which surplus funding will be awarded is based on previously-proposed bills in Israel, and is similar in principle to that prevailing in Croatia: for each candidate elected to the Knesset from the underrepresented gender, the party will receive extra money to fund its election expenses. In the case of gender equality, such as the case of Meretz in the 19th Knesset, the party will receive extra funding for half of its Knesset members. As can be seen, parties which do not pass the electoral threshold and are not elected to Knesset will not be eligible for this kind of extra funding (as was the case of the Eretz Chadasha Party in the 2013 elections). Previous bills have offered an additional 0.5–2 finance units for each woman elected, and it seems that adding one finance unit is a reasonable and substantial addition. Under this proposal, in the 19th Knesset Meretz would have increased its election funding by 55% compared to the current situation, and Yesh Atid by 40%.

In accordance with the notion that quotas are only a temporary measure to promote gender equality, we suggest that the proposed amendments

to the Political Parties (Financing) Law 5733–1973 will be canceled if the newly-elected Knesset has at least a 40% representation of MKs from each gender for two consecutive elections.

3. Indirect Step: Enlarging the Knesset

The Israeli legislature is one of the world's smallest parliaments in terms of the ratio of the number of legislators to the number of citizens. Historically, the size of the Knesset was not determined by a rational mathematical calculation, but rather expressed the connection of the founding fathers of the state to their Jewish origins: the number of Knesset members was set at 120, that being the number of members of the Great Assembly convened in Jerusalem in the fifth century BCE, following the return of the Jews to Israel from exile in Babylon (Friedberg and Atmor 2013). Today, more than 60 years later, Israel's population is now more than ten times larger than at the founding of the state, but the number of Knesset members remains the same. If in 1949 each Knesset member represented roughly 5,000 citizens, in 2012 each MK represents more than 60,000 citizens. Proposals to increase the number of Knesset members to 150 or 180 have been discussed in the past, with mixed reactions. Here we shall consider this idea only briefly, from the perspective of female representation.

We wish to examine whether the representation of women would be significantly improved if the Knesset numbered 180 members instead of 120. While it is clear that the number of women elected to the Knesset would increase in absolute numbers, what we are interested in examining is whether the proportion of women in the Knesset would also increase. This would indicate that some parties have concentrated their female candidates in what were considered unsafe slots for a 120-seat Knesset. Both tables below illustrate the differences in female representation were the Knesset to have 180 members, based on the 2006 and 2009 election results. The comparison was carried out by first

allocating seats in a 180-seat Knesset to parties based on the election results for 2006 (Table 19) and 2009 (Table 20), and then examining the lists of candidates for each party to determine how many women would have been elected to Knesset from each list.

Table 19: The Proportion of Women in a 180-Member Knesset, Simulated According to the 2006 Election Results

Party	Seats in 120-seat Knesset	Female MKs	Seats in 180-seat Knesset	Female MKs
Kadima	29	6	44	11
Labor Party	19	5	29	5
Likud	12	1	18	3
Shas	12	0	18	0
Yisrael Beytenu	11	3	17	5
Ichud Leumi-NRP	9	0	14	2
Gil	7	1	11	2
United Torah Judaism	6	0	9	0
Meretz	5	1	7	2
Ra'am-Ta'al	4	0	5	0
Hadash	3	0	4	0
Balad	3	0	4	0
Total	120	17 (14.2%)	180	30 (16.7%)

Table 20: The Proportion of Women in a 180-Member Knesset,
Simulated According to the 2009 Election Results

Party	Seats in 120-seat Knesset	Female MKs	Seats in 180-seat Knesset	Female MKs
Kadima	28	7	42	10
Likud	27	5	41	8
Yisrael Beytenu	15	5	23	7
Labor Party	13	3	19	5
Shas	11	0	16	0
United Torah Judaism	5	0	7	0
Ra'am-Ta'al	4	0	6	0
Ichud Leumi	4	0	6	0
Hadash	4	0	6	2
Meretz	3	0	5	1
Jewish Home	3	0	5	0
Balad	3	1	4	1
Total	120	21 (17.5%)	180	34 (18.9%)

As can be seen, in terms of proportion the representation of women would have increased only moderately: an improvement of 1.4 percentage points for the 2009 elections, and of 2.5 percentage points for the 2006 elections. In terms of absolute numbers this change might be perceived as more significant: an addition of 13 female Knesset members in either of these Knesset assemblies.

Appendix A

Women as a Collective:
Critical Mass Theory and Its Critiques

Critical mass theory is identified primarily with Rosabeth Kanter (1977) and Drude Dahlerup (1988). The theory posits that for women to be a significant factor in parliament, and to succeed in influencing parliamentary products (whether actual policy or parliamentary debate), they must cross a minimum threshold of representation; in other words, they must reach a "critical mass." According to this theory—borrowed from the fields of physics and chemistry, where a critical mass of a given substance is necessary to set a certain process in motion—as long as women constitute a marginal factor in the legislature, their influence on its product will be negligible. However, when their representation increases, and they change from being a marginal minority (generally less than 15%) to being a group with presence and importance, their influence also becomes significant.

The impact of this shift can be varied, creating changes in society's reaction to female politicians, in the performance and effectiveness of women in parliament, in the political culture and social climate, in political debate, and in public policy. Similarly, there can be a rise in the relative power of women in society (Dahlerup 1988). The central mechanism to which scholars generally refer, in the context of critical mass theory in the social sciences, is the formation of coalitions. The contention is that when the number of women in parliament expands, they can form coalitions with other women from different parties to advance women's interests (Saint-Germain 1989; Thomas 1994). This argument—like the theory as a whole, which plays a central role in the

literature on substantive representation—has been heavily criticized. In practice, a considerable number of studies have been devoted to efforts to refute this theory and to prove that even in parliaments where women's representation is low, women have influence on the legislature product, or conversely, that in legislatures where there is a high proportion of women, this does not necessarily have a significant impact on what the parliament produces.

Gery's (2002) study sought to examine critical mass theory in New Zealand between 1975 and 1999, during which time the proportion of women's representation rose from 4% to 29%. The study looked at changes in political culture, the political agenda, and policy. Based on the findings, when women reached a level of 15% representation or more they began to be more active and to make their voices heard more effectively with reference to women's interests. When they reached a level of 20%, they reported that they began to feel part of a group and to enjoy the leverage it provided. Yet even 29% representation was not enough to alter policy or the political culture in New Zealand's parliament to a sizeable extent. Among the reasons for this were the greater impact of existing political divisions, a counter-reaction by men to the rise in women's representation, and social conservatism. Gery contends that it is also necessary to examine the percentage of women in government and not only in parliament, since this has a considerable influence on policy.

The 2007 study by Beckwith and Cowell-Meyers comes out against critical mass theory, criticizing it from a theoretical standpoint. They point out that numerical representation of women does not necessarily guarantee substantive representation, and argue that the theory is not sufficiently developed; does not explain the mechanism that generates change following the rise in numerical representation; disregards possible counter-reactions to the growing number of women in parliament; and likewise discounts the ability of a small number of women in parliament to spearhead change. The article contends further that a critical mass

of women must be combined with a set of parliamentary factors and a specific social context in order for descriptive representation of women to also lead to substantive representation.

In contrast to the various critical mass studies, Crowley's (2004) work considers how a small minority of women can actually have an influence on policy. To this end, she examined numerous legislatures in different states in the United States between 1976 and 1984. Her argument runs contrary to critical mass theory, stating that it is precisely when women are a small minority in parliament that they can affect policy-making, whereas when they are a group of significant size, they wield less influence due to the phenomenon referred to in the literature as "backlash,"[45] or to the group's becoming more heterogeneous and less focused. Other studies have joined in the criticism of critical mass theory, arguing that even a small minority of women legislators can have a considerable impact on parliament—at times even more so than a large, prominent group of women (Swain 1993; Mansbridge 1999; Bratton 2005).

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45   This refers to a strong counter-reaction in response to the growing predominance of women in parliament, and reflects the negative response of the male majority to the boost in female parliamentarians' strength.

Appendix B

The Representation of Women in the Knesset (on the date the Knesset was convened), by Party and Block

2nd Knesset (11 women in total)
Mapai – 6
General Zionists – 2
Herut, Maki, Mapam – 1
   Right: 3
   Left: 8

3rd Knesset (12 women in total)
Mapai – 6
Achdut Ha'voda – 2
Maki, General Zionists, Herut
and Mapam – 1
   Right: 2
   Left: 10

4th Knesset (9 women in total)
Mapai – 6
Mapam, NRP, Herut – 1
   Right: 2
   Left: 7

5th Knesset (10 women in total)
Mapai – 4
Achdut Ha'avoda, Maki, Liberals,
NRP, Mafdal, Herut – 1
   Right: 3
   Left: 7

6th Knesset (9 women in total)
Alignment – 5
Mapam, Rafi, Herut-Liberals
Bloc, NRP – 1
   Right: 2
   Center: 1
   Left: 6

7th Knesset (8 women in total)
Alignment – 6
NRP, Herut-Liberals Bloc – 1
   Right: 2
   Left: 6

8th Knesset (10 women in total)
Alignment – 7
Ratz – 2
Likud – 1
   Right: 1
   Left: 9

9th Knesset (8 women in total)
Alignment – 4
Likud – 2
Ratz, NRP – 1
   Right: 3
   Left: 5

10th Knesset (8 women in total)
Alignment – 4
Likud – 2
Ratz, Tehiya – 1
   Right: 3
   Left: 5

11th Knesset (10 women in total)
Alignment – 6
Likud – 2
Ratz, Tehiya – 1
   Right: 3
   Left: 7

12th Knesset (7 women in total)
Alignment – 4
Likud, Ratz, Tehiya – 1
   Right: 2
   Left: 5

13th Knesset (11 women in total)
Labor – 4
Meretz – 3
Likud – 2
Hadash, Tzomet – 1
   Right: 3
   Left: 8

14th Knesset (9 women in total)
Labor – 3
Likud – 2
Meretz – 2
Hadash, Yisrael Ba'aliya – 1
   Right: 3
   Left: 6

15th Knesset (14 women in total)
Meretz – 4
Yisrael Achat, Likud – 3
Hadash, Shinui, Yisrael Ba'aliya,
Merkaz – 1
   Right: 4
   Center: 2
   Left: 8

16th Knesset (18 women in total)
Likud – 7
Labor – 4
Shinui – 3
Meretz, NRP, Yisrael Ba'aliya, Am Echad – 1
   Right: 9
   Center: 3
   Left: 6

17th Knesset (17 women in total)
Kadima – 6
Labor – 5
Yisrael Beytenu – 3
Meretz, Likud, Gil – 1
   Right: 4
   Center: 7
   Left: 6

18th Knesset (21 women in total)
Kadima – 7
Likud, Yisrael Beytenu – 5
Labor – 3
Balad – 1
   Right: 10
   Center: 7
   Left: 4

19th Knesset (27 women in total)
Yesh Atid – 8
Likud Beytenu – 7
Labor – 4
Meretz, Jewish Home – 3
Hatnua, Balad – 1
   Right: 10
   Center: 9
   Left: 8

Appendix C

Male and Female Knesset Members Whose Parliamentary Activity was Analyzed in the Study

The following tables present the names of the Members of Knesset sampled for this research. In the case of female MKs we analyzed the entire research population, that is, all female MKs in the parliament. In the case of male MKs we used a convenience sample. For this purpose, we selected for each female MK a similar as possible counterpart male MK, in terms of party affiliation, parliamentary experience, and parliamentary role. The tables below show these pairs of legislators side by side.

17th Knesset

Party	Female MK	Party	Male MK
Kadima	Ruhama Avraham Balila	Kadima	Eli Aflalo
Kadima	Amira Dotan	Kadima	Shai Hermesh
Kadima	Marina Solodkin	Kadima	Tzachi Hanegbi
Kadima	Ronit Tirosh	Kadima	Otniel Schneller
Likud	Limor Livnat	Likud	Michael Eitan
Labor	Colette Avital	Labor	Avishay Braverman
Labor	Orit Noked	Labor	Michael Melchior
Labor	Nadia Hilou	Labor	Shachiv Shnaan

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Party	Female MK	Party	Male MK
Labor	Shelly Yachimovich	Labor	Yoram Marciano
Yisrael Beytenu	Lia Shemtov	Yisrael Beytenu	Robert Ilatov
Yisrael Beytenu	Esterina Tartman	Yisrael Beytenu	Alex Miller
Yisrael Beytenu	Sofa Landver	Yisrael Beytenu	Yuri Shtern
Meretz	Zahava Gal-On	Meretz	Avshalom Vilan
Gil	Sara Marom Shalev	Gil	Moshe Sharoni

18th Knesset

Party	Female MK	Party	Male MK
Kadima	Ruhama Avraham Balila	Kadima	Eli Aflalo
Kadima	Rachel Adatto	Kadima	Zeev Bielski
Kadima	Orit Zuaretz	Kadima	Nachman Shai
Kadima	Tzipi Livni	Kadima	Ronnie Bar-On
Kadima	Dalia Itzik	Kadima	Meir Sheetrit
Kadima	Marina Solodkin	Kadima	Gideon Ezra
Kadima	Ronit Tirosh	Kadima	Otniel Schneller
Kadima	Nino Abesadze	Kadima	Arie Bibi
Kadima	Yulia Shamalov Berkovich	Kadima	Robert Tiviaev
Likud	Tzipi Hotovely	Likud	Yariv Levin
Likud	Miri Regev	Likud	Danny Danon

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Party	Female MK	Party	Male MK
Labor	Shelly Yachimovich	Labor	Avishay Braverman
Independence	Einat Wilf	Labor	Daniel Ben Simon
Yisrael Beytenu	Lia Shemtov	Yisrael Beytenu	Robert Ilatov
Yisrael Beytenu	Fania Kirshenbaum	Yisrael Beytenu	Moshe Mutz Matalon
Yisrael Beytenu	Anastassia Michaeli	Yisrael Beytenu	Hamad Amar
Yisrael Beytenu	Orly Levy-Abekasis	Yisrael Beytenu	Alex Miller
Meretz	Zahava Gal-On	Meretz	Ilan Gilon
Balad	Hanin Zoabi	Balad	Said Naffaa

Appendix D

Differences between Men and Women in Involvement in Women's and Children/Family Issues – Significance Tests

	Type of activity	Category	Average – women	Average – men	t-value	Significance
18th Knesset	Private members' bills	Women	1.9	0.37	-3.34	.00
		Children/family	1.5	0.63	-1.7	.09
	Laws passed	Women	1.00	0.42	-1.4	ns
		Children/family	0.62	0.37	-0.9	ns
	Parliamentary questions	Women	1.2	0.16	-3.00	.00
		Children/family	1.00	0.35	-2.05	.05
17th Knesset	Private members' bills	Women	1.2	0.23	-1.7	ns
		Children/family	1.6	0.38	-2.20	.04
	Laws passed	Women	0.00	0.67	-2.00	.07
		Children/family	0.67	0.33	-0.92	ns
	Parliamentary questions	Women	0.45	0.46	0.01	ns
		Children/family	2.00	1.77	-0.2	ns

ns = not significant

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Why is it important for women to be represented in the Knesset and in cabinet? Are women who are elected to these institutions expected to do more to promote "female" interests than their male counterparts? What are the factors influencing the representation of women in Israeli politics? How has their representation changed over the years, and would the imposition of quotas be a good idea?

This policy paper examines the representation of women in Israeli politics from a comparative perspective. Its guiding premise is that women's representation in politics, and particularly in legislative bodies, is of great importance in that it is tightly bound to liberal and democratic principles. According to some researchers, it is also important because female legislators advance "female" issues more than male legislators do.

While there has been a noticeable improvement in the representation of women in Israeli politics over the years, the situation in Israel is still fairly poor in this regard. This paper looks at the impact of this situation on women's status and gender equality in Israeli society, and offers recommendations for improving women's representation in politics. The steps recommended are well-accepted in many democracies around the world, but have yet to be tried in Israel.

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