

SEMINAR FOR JOURNALISTS

## WOMEN AND THE ELECTIONS: WILL THIS TIME BE DIFFERENT?

4-5 March 2014, Brussels

### PURPOSE

The European Elections 2014 will see national parties finalising the lists of candidates to the European elections and European political parties proposing candidates to the presidency of the European Commission for the first time.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the European Parliament's Press Service is holding a seminar in Brussels on 4-5 March 2014 to provide journalists and MEPs the opportunity of discussing gender aspects within European politics ahead of the European Elections 2014.

### INSIDE

This leaflet provides extracts from documents prepared by the European Parliament's Policy Department on Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs relevant to the topics of discussion of this seminar.

Scan the QR code or click on the title of the publication to access it directly.



### PUBLICATIONS

#### Electoral gender quota systems and their implementation in Europe (2013 study updating 2011 study) - June 2013



The note is an update to the 2011 report which maps the diffusion of electoral gender quotas in the 30 EU/EEA countries and evaluates the effectiveness of different quota types in different electoral systems. It shows that legislated quotas are implemented in eight countries and that party quotas are implemented in 14 (additional) countries. Furthermore, some gender quotas have resulted in major leaps in women's representation, while others have led to almost no change. In general, the note reveals a mixed picture in Europe when it comes to women's representation. Women's parliamentary representation only increased from 23.6 per cent in 2008 to 24.7 per cent in 2011 and to 25.6 per cent in 2013. Their representation increased in



the most recent parliamentary elections of 19 countries as well as in the elections of the European Parliament. Four countries experienced stagnation, whereas the share of women MPs dropped in seven countries. One conclusion of the 2011 report is that in order to change women's historical underrepresentation effectively, electoral gender quotas have to fit the electoral system and should include regulations about the rank order of women and men on the electoral lists as well as sanctions for non-compliance.



## Women in decision-making: the role of the new media for increased political participation - June 2013



This study reviews the barriers to women's involvement in politics and how new media may help increase this involvement at different levels of political participation. The research made with MEPs and end-users of new media platforms, together with the case studies on eight new media projects show that women's political interests are qualitatively different to men's. Women tend to participate in non-party actions more than men, who tend to be more involved with formal politics. Social, structural and situational barriers to women in formal politics are considerable. New media can be used in diverse ways to either directly or indirectly engage women in the political discourse.



## Actions for gender balance in the European Parliament - the elections 2014 - June 2013



This note presents an overview of the legislative initiatives and measures undertaken by the European Parliament, women's associations and organisations working in the field of gender equality. It also includes research output regarding gender equality. An analysis is made on the way legislative measures actually work in practice and on their implementation by the Member States. The note also describes some of the findings of the European Institute for Gender Equality on women in media industries and gives recommendations on increasing the involvement of mainstream media in the participation of women in political decision-making, in view of the European Elections 2014.



## POLICY DEPARTMENTS: WHO ARE WE?

Effective parliamentary work relies on specialised, objective, high-quality and up-to-date information. To this end, five units responsible for research, analysis and policy advice, known as policy departments, were created to provide this expert advice. Their activities cover all areas of competence of the European Parliament, producing high-level independent advice, based on research carried out either in-house or by external researchers.

**Outputs:** Policy departments deliver a wide range of expertise, comprising texts as diverse as in-depth studies on complex legislative issues, comparative studies and short background briefings. These documents aim to support the work of the various parliamentary bodies. They serve a variety of purposes: they can feed directly into the legislative work of a specific committee or serve as a briefing for delegations of Members. Apart from a few confidential documents, all texts produced by the policy departments are available on the Parliament's website for the benefit of all Members and the wider public.

**Events:** The Policy Departments also organise events that enhance Parliament's analytical capacity and develop common approaches to current political issues. These include thematic workshops, conferences held in cooperation with national parliaments, presentations by external experts at committee meetings; technical meetings organised by internal experts to support major legislative reports, Parliament's citizens AGORAs as well as policy hubs including in-house experts and Think Tanks.

**Scrutiny:** Policy Departments also provide research support to enhance the European Parliament's capacity to monitor EU negotiations and the implementation of international agreements, including trade agreements. The departments have developed an in-house methodology to scrutinise EU-funded projects.

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## FACT SHEETS ON THE EU

The aim of the Fact Sheets is to provide an overview of European integration and of the European Parliament's contribution to that process. The content of these Fact Sheets covers six main areas: how the European Union works; citizens' Europe; the internal market; the economic and monetary union; sectoral policies; and the EU's external relations.

The online version is reviewed and updated at regular intervals throughout the year.



All Fact Sheets:  
[www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets)

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