Gender Equality in Elected Office: A Six-Step Action Plan

A study by Pippa Norris and Mona Lena Krook

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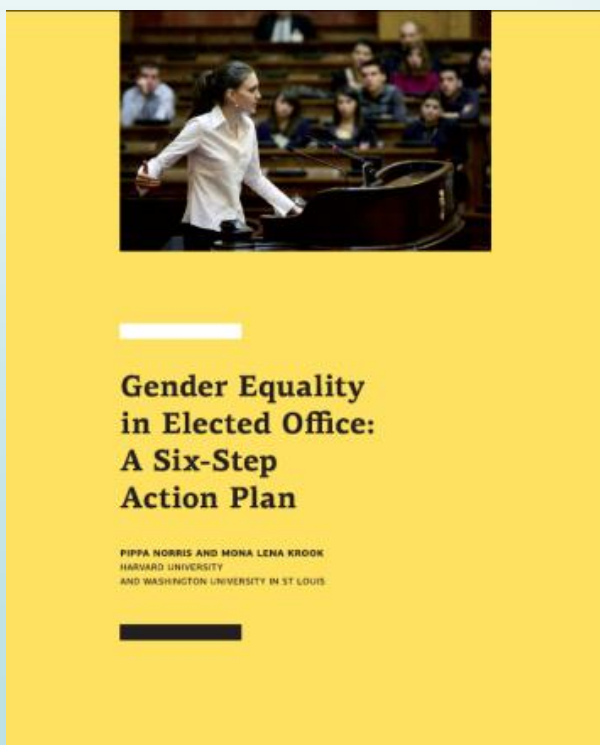
Kristin van der Leest
OSCE ODIHR
Warsaw, 17 April 2012
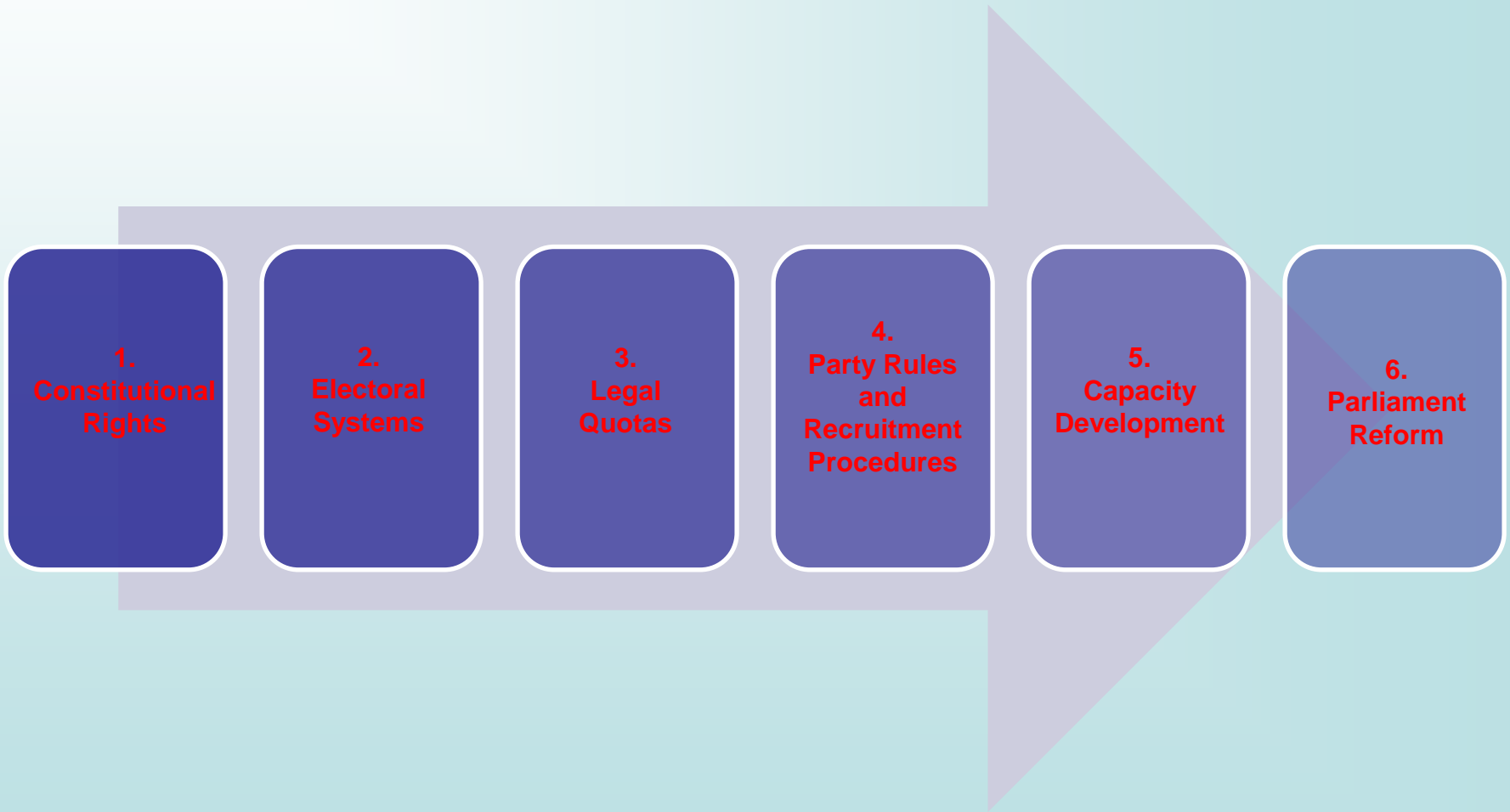
% Women in the Lower House of Parliament, 2010
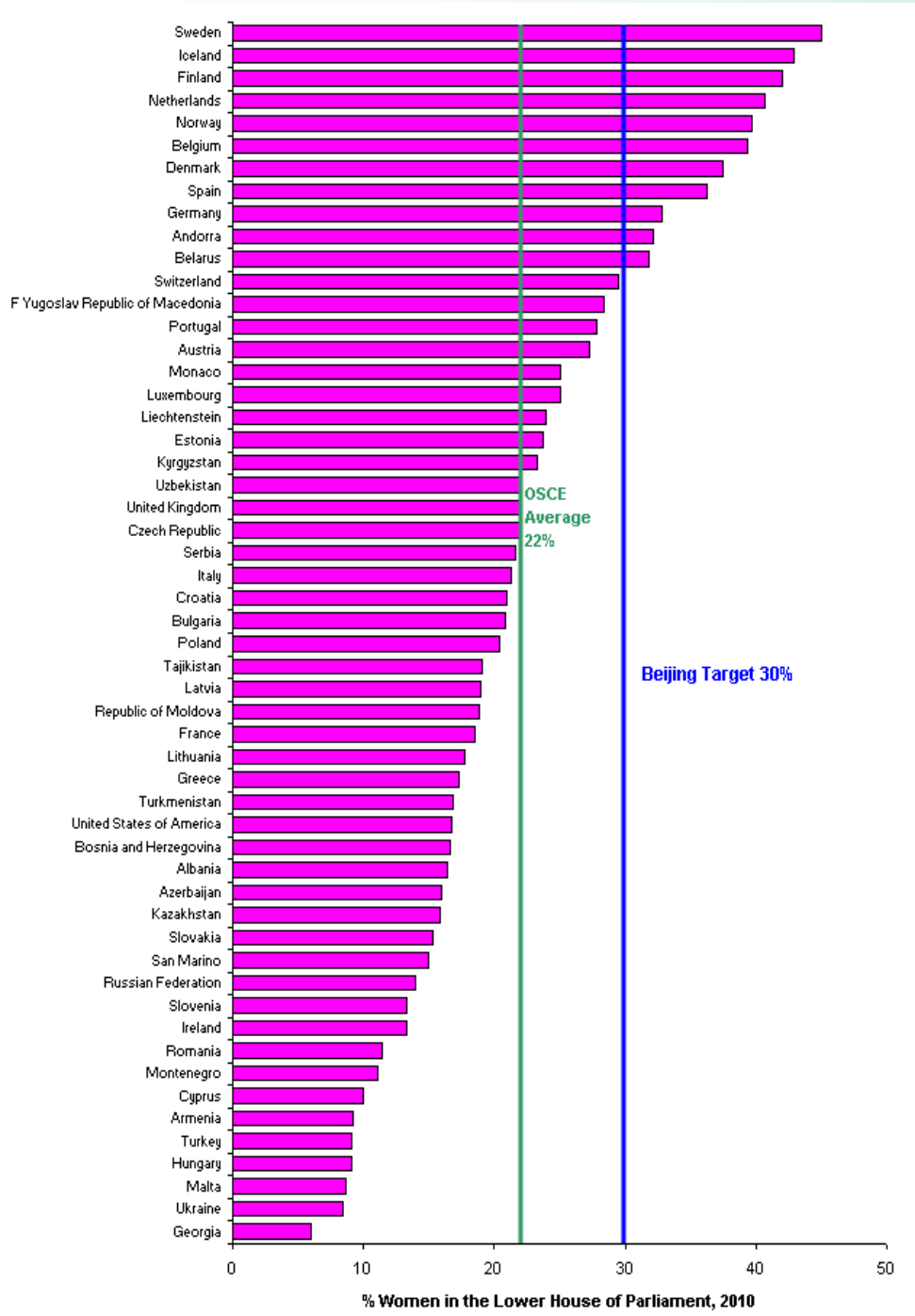
- *Current rate in OSCE:* **22.6%**

- *Current rate in Poland:* **23.7%**

- *If current trends persist, equal representation will only be achieved in:*
- *50 years in the OSCE*
- *150 years worldwide*

The Six-Step Action Plan

1. Constitutional Rights

2. Electoral Systems

3. Legal Quotas

4. Party Rules and Recruitment Procedures

5. Capacity Development

6. Parliament Reform

Step 1: Constitutional Frameworks

- **Equality of women and men** enshrined!

- **Equal rights of men and women** to participate:
  - In political and public life
  - As voters and as candidates for public office
  - In policymaking processes

- Inclusion of **gender quotas:**
  - France
  - Rwanda

Step 2: Electoral Systems

- ***Type* of Electoral System:**
  - Electoral systems and women's representation, OSCE States

System Type	% Women in House 2000	% Women in House 2010
MAJORITARIAN	12.7	20.2
MIXED	11.5	18.7
PR List	**19.1**	**24.4**
Total (Average)	**15.9**	**22.6**

- ***Aspects of* Electoral System**
  - Size of constituency
  - Term limits
  - Ballot structure
  - Threshold requirements for candidates and parties
  - Access to public funding, public air time and media

Step 3: Do Legal Quotas Work?

	Electoral system	Year adopted	%	Rank placement requirements	Penalties for non-compliance	% Women in 2000 (prior to law)	% Women in 2010 (after law)	% Change
Macedonia	List PR	2002	30%	No	Non-registration	6.7	32.5	**+25.8**
Kyrgyzstan	List PR	2007	30%	Yes	Non-registration	0.0	25.6	**+25.6**
Serbia	List PR	2002	30%	Yes	Non-registration	5.1	21.6	**+16.5**
Belgium	List PR	2002	50%	Yes	Non-registration	23.3	39.3	**+16.0**
Uzbekistan	2nd Round	2004	30%	No	None	7.2	22.0	**+14.8**
Albania	Mixed	2008	30%	No	Campaign funding	5.2	16.4	**+11.2**
Portugal	List PR	2006	33%	Yes	Campaign funding	17.4	27.4	**+10.0**
Spain	List PR	2007	40%	Yes	Non-registration	28.3	36.6	**+8.3**
France	2 Round	2000	50%	No	Campaign funding	10.9	18.9	**+8.0**
Slovenia	List PR	2006	35%	No	Non-registration	7.8	14.4	**+6.6**
Armenia	Mixed	2005	15%	Yes	Non-registration	3.1	9.1	**+6.0**
Romania	List PR	2004	None	No	None	7.3	11.3	**+4.0**
POLAND	*List PR*	*2011*	*35%*	*No*	*Non-registration*	*20*	*23.7*	***+3.7***
Bosnia Herzegovina	List PR	2001	33%	Yes	None	28.6	19.0	**-9.6**
All other OSCE states						**16.6**	**22.4**	**+5.8**

Step 4: Party Rules and Procedures

- **1) Regulatory Environment: Legislative Framework**
    - Laws on Political Parties, Campaign Financing, Elections
    - Compliance with international, national gender equality standards
    - Special measures: legal gender quotas
        - Placement mandate, sanctions for non-compliance

- **2) But what about *inside* parties?**
    - Need to balance respect for freedom of association and assembly, with respect for democratic principles
    - Citizens/governments have a stake in how parties, as public associations, function *internally*
        - Parties often receive "special treatment", with access to public funding, public media, donors…

Guidelines on Political Party Regulation

osce
ODIHR

Internal Party Democracy

- **Conducting an internal "gender audit":**

    - How many women on selection boards?
    - Are selection procedures written down, transparent?
    - Are there sanctions or means of appeal when procedures not complied with?
    - How do parties recruit women as candidates (within party/without; challengers or loyal?
    - Are women placed in winnable positions on party lists and/or in winnable districts?
    - Is there a "women's club", branch, caucus?
    - How are party resources allocated?
    - What is the party culture?
    - Where are the "real" deals made? Officially or behind the scenes?
        - Money, campaign resources, access to media, party property

Step 5: Building Capacity & Awareness

Czech politics: Do you really have a choice?

1) Equal opportunity initiatives:
        - Candidate training, recruitment initiatives, and knowledge networks
2) Combating stereotypes; Raising awareness:
        - Media campaigns, voter and citizen education
3) Political party initiatives:
        - Women's sections, fundraising, and women's parties

Step 6: Gender-sensitive Parliamentary Practices