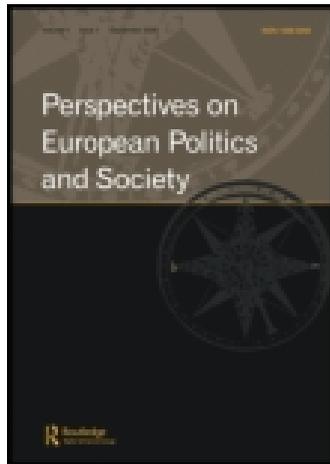


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Representation of Women in Second-order Elections: The Czech Republic and Slovakia Compared

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ABSTRACT *Elections to the European Parliament (EP) fall into the category of second-order national elections. In these types of elections voters behave differently when casting their vote. But what about political parties: do they behave differently in EP elections than in national parliamentary elections? This article draws on available electoral data related to women's representation in the Czech Republic and Slovakia to explicitly link the second-order election (SOE) model to independent actions of political parties. The results show that women candidates have (1) more positions and better ranking on ballot lists; as well as (2) better chances of getting elected when running in SOEs in Slovakia but not in the Czech Republic. In order to explain this variance in results, the most similar system design (MSSD) was applied. The findings from the MSSD indicate that three variables have the potential to explain this variance in representation of women in EP elections between the countries: parties' positions on European integration dimension, the numerical size of national legislature, and preferential voting. The variable parties' positions on European integration have the highest explanatory power.*

KEY WORDS: European Parliament, second-order elections, political parties, women's representation, first-order elections

The fact that elections to the EP are different from national legislative elections in the European Union (EU) member states has been evident ever since the very first of these Europe-wide elections were held in 1979. In their immediate aftermath, Reif and Schmitt (1980) labelled the first direct European elections 'second-order national elections' (for an overview, see Marsh & Mikhaylov, 2010). After more than three decades and six more sets of European elections since Reif and Schmitt (1980) published their seminal work, SOE

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model has become one of the most widely tested and supported theories of voting behaviour in elections to the EP (Hix & Marsh, 2007; Marsh, 1998; Reif, 1984).

It is quite logical that given their aggregate nature, the SOE model's predictions have been mostly tested using aggregate electoral data and election-related survey data. This, however, led researchers to focus primarily on sophisticated strategies of voters. Nevertheless, by primarily focusing on the strategies of *voters*, the model is rendered blind to independent actions of the rest of the electoral circle: the *media* and the *political parties* (see also Weber, 2007). Since perhaps the most important aspect of SOEs is that there is less at stake (Reif & Schmitt, 1980, pp. 9–18), it is viable to assume that all the three above-mentioned actors experience the less-at-stake character of SOEs alike.

In this note, we try to contribute to the literature on SOEs by directly linking the SOE model to independent actions of other actors in the electoral circle than to *voters*: the *political parties*. We do this through the analysis of a descriptive representation of women in the 2004 and 2009 EP elections in the Czech Republic and Slovakia and *at the same time* applying the SOE model. The remainder of this note is as follows. The next section introduces main concepts, presents theoretical framework and unveils the expectations while briefly reviewing the literature on SOE model. The third section clarifies the methodological issues and presents the data. The fourth section presents the results of the analysis. Because our expectations were confirmed in Slovakia but not in the Czech Republic and considering both countries to be systems that are (or appear to be) similar, the fifth section applies the MSSD in order to shed light on the potential source of the observed variation in women's representation in EP elections between the two countries. Finally, the last section concludes by summarising the findings and discussing their implications.

The SOE Model

The SOE model has become the dominant model in any academic discussion of elections to the EP. In a later work, Reif proposed an operational definition of such second-order elections (SOEs):

All elections (except the one that fills the most important political office of the entire system and therefore is the first-order election) are 'national second-order elections', irrespective of whether they take place in the entire, or only in a part of, the country. (Reif, 1997, p. 117)

In fact, the SOE model postulates that there is a qualitative difference between different types of elections depending on the perception of what is at stake; compared to FOEs, in SOEs there is *less at stake* owing to the fact that they do not determine the composition of government (Reif & Schmitt, 1980). It is important to note that in their ideal form, SOEs are fought within the same party system as the FOEs (Marsh & Mikhaylov, 2010; Reif & Schmitt, 1980).¹

An important shortcoming of the SOE model lies in its primary focus on sophisticated strategies of *voters*. The model does not involve an explicit link to independent actions of the rest of the electoral circle – the *media* and the *political parties* – despite the findings of many studies showing that (1) parties allocate fewer resources for campaigns in SOEs than in first-order contests (Hertner, 2011; Maier & Tenscher, 2009); and (2) EP election campaigns are of low intensity and are dominated by national issues (de Vreese, 2009;

Irwin, 1995). Moreover, European elections are consistently found not to be very visible in national television news and there is little doubt that the media find them less interesting than national FOEs (de Vreese et al., 2006; Kovář, 2010). Since perhaps the most important aspect of SOEs is that there is less at stake, it is viable to assume that all the three above-mentioned electoral actors perceive the less-at-stake character of SOEs likewise and thus EP elections matter less not only to voters but also to political parties and the media (Weber, 2007). Consequently, in order to better understand EP elections we would benefit from focusing on the links between voters, candidates, political parties, and the media (see also Hobolt & Franklin, 2011; Strömbäck et al., 2011).

In fact, connecting the SOE model to representation of women, existing comparative research conducted in the British context suggests that political parties nominate more women candidates for SOEs in comparison to FOEs. Moreover, when standing for SOEs, women candidates have better opportunities for electoral success (Harrison, 2005, 2010). Overall, women have been shown to generally have better political opportunities at the EU level than in national politics (see Freedman, 2002; Kantola, 2009; Vallance & Davies, 1986). The higher percentage of women MEPs than MPs and consequent lower level of women's under-representation in the EP highlight this finding. Nevertheless, we still know little about women's representation in EP elections in the new EU member states, in particular, concerning a systematic comparison of different orders of elections (i.e., FOEs vs. SOEs). This lack of studies concerned with women's representation is particularly surprising given the topic's long tradition in political science research.

Given that national political parties establish the procedures governing both national legislative and EP elections, control candidate selection process for both offices, set the content of electoral campaigns in both elections, and structure the labels under which parliamentarians are elected (Hix & Lord, 1997; Linek & Outlý, 2006), we suppose that analysing women's representation and comparing it across FOEs and SOEs might tell us about if and how second-order political parties perceive EP elections and as such help us to understand how high stakes political parties assign to SOEs.

Expectations

The SOE model does not offer explicit propositions or testable hypotheses concerning women's representation in EP elections. Nevertheless, the logic of the SOE model provides political parties with the opportunity to experiment insofar that there is less at stake. From a theoretical point of view, since the EP is not considered to be a site of effective power, becoming a member of the EP (MEP) is not as competitive as becoming a member of NP (MP) and political parties are thus more willing to present women candidates for EP than for national FOEs (Vallance & Davies, 1986; Verzichelli & Edinger, 2005). In other words, it could be argued that 'where there is power there are no women; and where there is no power there are women' (Freedman, 2002, p. 179). Moreover, parties may see EP elections as a chance to prove their good credentials regarding gender equality by selecting a large number of women candidates for SOEs where they feel less is at stake. Given that parties play a crucial role in candidate selection processes in all EU member states (Hix & Lord, 1997), it is important to understand women's inclusion in parties: women as candidates and women as representatives.

Taken together, the logic of the SOE model along with the findings of previous research bring about some clear expectations about women's representation. Since there is *less at*

stake national political parties nominate more women candidates to SOEs as the less-at-stake dimension allows them to put forward less traditional slates of candidates without high risks (Freedman, 2002; Harrison, 2005). In other words, in analysing the representation of women across first- and second-order institutions, our assumption is that bias exists with institutions alone and political parties adapt accordingly. Thus, it may be assumed that political parties' behaviour in relation to promotion of women differs across FOEs and SOEs.

Based on this discussion, we expect that female politicians will have better prospects for both equality of opportunities (women as candidates) and equality of results (women as representatives) in SOEs (see Dahlerup, 2007). Moreover, we also expect that the ratio of women representatives to women candidates will be higher in SOEs. In other words, women candidates will have more and better ranking on ballot lists as well as better chances of getting elected in SOEs compared to FOEs.

Research Design and Data

The operationalization of first- and second-order elections is straightforward. FOEs are operationalized as the most important elections in a given country (Reif, 1984). In both countries, these are national parliamentary elections. All other elections, including EP elections, in a given country are second-order national elections (Reif, 1997). In both countries, only political parties and their coalitions can be nominated in elections and as such the selection of candidates occurs only within running parties (Linek & Outlý, 2006, Outlý, 2007). Political parties, through the candidate selection process, limit the choices available to voters. They make decisions about what candidates to field and how much support to give them through, for example, placement on party lists (Kunovich & Paxton, 2005). The electoral process thus creates a two-tier filter that women must pass through: first, they have to be selected by parties as candidates, and second, they have to be selected for political office.

Hence, in order to analyse women's representation across SOEs and FOEs and address our expectations, it is necessary to understand both female candidates and female representatives and we therefore apply two levels of analysis:

- (1) *Women as candidates*: the percentage of female candidates for the country, calculated by dividing the total number of female candidates by the total number of candidates running for election (equality of opportunities). Given that an increased number of female candidates is often combined with 'hopeless' list placement (Dahlerup, 2007; Kunovich, 2003) and 'having an equal number of male and female candidates is little more than a gesture if the most winnable places are preserved for men and women simply "make up the numbers" at the bottom of party lists' (Harrison, 2005, p. 94).

Secondly, we include the second level of analysis:

- (2) *Women as representatives*: the percentage of women in the EP and national parliament (NP), calculated by dividing the total number of women elected by the total number of positions in the legislature (equality of results). In both countries,

representation in the lower house is considered since only elections to the lower house are first-order national elections.

Finally, because we expect that the ratio of elected female-to-female candidates will be higher in SOEs we include third measure:

- (3) *Ratio of representatives to candidates*: the yield of female representatives from the female candidates, calculated as the percentage of female representatives elected divided by the percentage of female candidates. Values of one indicate a one-to-one relationship between the percentage of candidates and the percentage of female representatives (see Kunovich & Paxton, 2005). Since the focus here is on women's descriptive representation only, we draw on electoral data, namely, aggregate electoral results and formal composition of ballots as made available through both countries' statistical offices and the official web site of the EP.

Before presenting the results, we have to deal with potential caveats of this research. The type of electoral system used has an effect on electoral opportunities for under-represented sections of society (McAllister & Studlar, 2002; Paxton et al., 2010). Moreover, the type of electoral system used is said to affect how parties organise the candidate selection process, the number of constituencies and district magnitude influences the level of centralisation of the candidate selection process within parties (Gallagher & Marsh, 1988; Linek & Outlý, 2006). Both countries, however, use some kind of proportional representation (PR) system, with a possibility of preferential voting for both SOEs and FOEs analysed here (Outlý, 2007; Šedo, 2007). Each country's ballot structure is characterised as an ordered list system by Farrell and Scully (2007), despite the fact that both Czech and Slovak voters have a multiple-candidate vote option.² In reality, Klíma (2010, p. 15) concluded that preferential voting had practically no influence on the outcome in the Czech EP elections.

Thus, the ballot list ranking drafted by political parties is in both countries across FOEs and SOEs rather definitive and the impact of preferential voting is negligible (Kunovich, 2003; Lebeda, 2007; Macháček, 2009). In Slovakia, the number of constituencies is the same (1) across both types of elections. In the Czech Republic, the country is divided into 14 constituencies for FOEs and uses a single constituency for SOEs. Nevertheless, the district magnitude in these constituencies is not much different from the district magnitude in EP elections, given the number of mandates allocated (Lebeda, 2007; Outlý, 2007).

Results

First of all, Tables 1 and 2 provide descriptive statistics of women as candidates and women as representatives. Do women have better prospects of being nominated as candidates and getting elected when standing for SOEs in the Czech Republic and Slovakia? Figure 1 shows the level of descriptive representation of women in both countries' legislatures and national delegations to the EP in all four election years analysed here. In Slovakia, women clearly have better opportunities for electoral success in the EP elections than in first-order national elections. The level of descriptive representation of women in the Slovak NP was 16% (2006–2010) and 15% (2010) respectively, while within the national

Table 1. Summary of candidates for national and EP elections

Country	EP elections			National elections		
	2004	2009	Total	2006	2010	Total
CZ	806 (203)	708 (199)	1514 (402)	4985 (1383)	5022 (1364)	10,007 (2747)
SK	188 (49)	184 (52)	372 (101)	2340 (532)	2366 (539)	4706 (1071)

Note: Values show total number of candidates and total number of women candidates in brackets.

Table 2. Summary of representatives in national and European parliament

Country	EP elections			National elections		
	2004	2009	Total	2006	2010	Total
CZ	24 (5)	22 (4)	46 (9)	200 (31)	200 (31)	400 (75)
SK	14 (5)	13 (5)	27 (10)	150 (24)	150 (23)	300 (47)

Note: Values show total number of representatives and total number of women representatives in brackets.

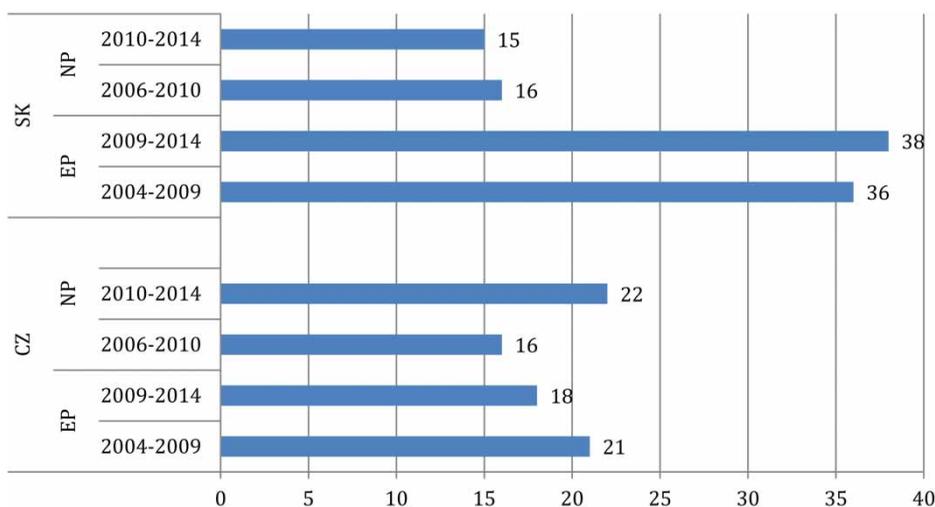


Figure 1. Women representatives in Czech and Slovak NP and delegation to the EP (%)
Source: Czech Statistical Office (2011); Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2011).

delegation to the EP, it was 36% (2004–2009) and 38% (2009–2014) respectively, representing more than twice as high a level of women representatives in the EP than in Slovak NP. The evidence from the Czech Republic is mixed. Comparing the EP term 2004–2009 (21% of women) with the national parliamentary term 2006–2010 (16%), it is evident that the descriptive representation of women was higher in national delegation to the EP than in the Czech NP by 5%. On the other hand, for the next term in the EP (2009–2014) only 18% of representatives within the Czech national delegation are women, while in the Czech NP women make up 22% of MPs during the current term. The proportion of women in NP is

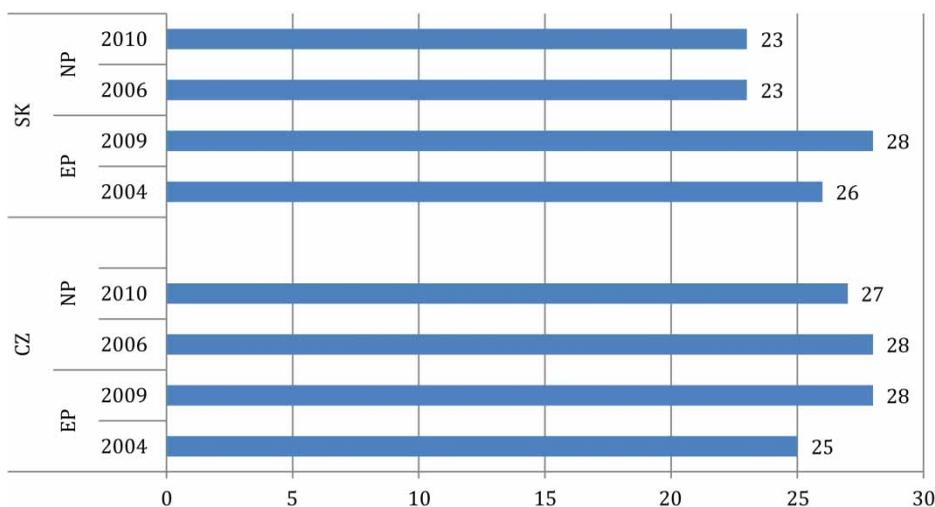


Figure 2. Women candidates in Czech and Slovak national parliamentary and EP elections (%)
Source: Czech Statistical Office (2011); Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2011).

thus higher than that in the EP. Overall, women seem to have similar opportunities of being elected in both second-order and first-order national elections in the Czech Republic.

Moreover, it is often lamented that there is a division between women as candidates and women as representatives – that equality of opportunities does not always result in equality of results (Dahlerup, 2007; Harrison, 2005). So we now turn to analysing women as candidates. We put forward an expectation that women will have better and more positions on ballots in SOEs than in FOEs. Figure 2 provides an overview of the aggregate levels of the descriptive representation of women on ballots for analysed elections in both countries. In Slovakia, there were more women on the ballot list for both the 2004 and 2009 EP elections than that for both the 2006 and 2010 national parliamentary elections. While before both the 2006 and 2010 national parliamentary elections, the proportion of women candidates on ballots was 23%, it was 26% before the 2004 EP elections and 28% before the 2009 EP contests. In other words, there were 3–5% more women candidates listed for SOEs than for FOEs.

The evidence from the Czech Republic is again mixed without a clear pattern. Before the 2004 EP elections, women made up 25% of all candidates, while before the 2006 national parliamentary elections they made up 28% of all candidates. There were more women on ballots for national parliamentary elections than for EP elections. On the other hand, before the 2009 EP elections women represented 28% of all candidates, while before the 2010 national parliamentary elections, they represented 27% of all candidates. Anyway, the differences are small and do not support our expectations.¹

Given the fact that an equal number of male and female candidates is little more than a gesture if the most winnable places are preserved for men, it is important to look beyond simply the number of women candidates on ballots. Figure 3 and Tables 3 and 4 hence compare the proportion of women as candidates and women as representatives across FOEs and SOEs. The case of Slovakia is telling: a small increase (3–5%) of women candidates on ballots for EP elections as opposed to national parliamentary elections resulted in more than twice as high a number of women representatives elected in Slovakian EP

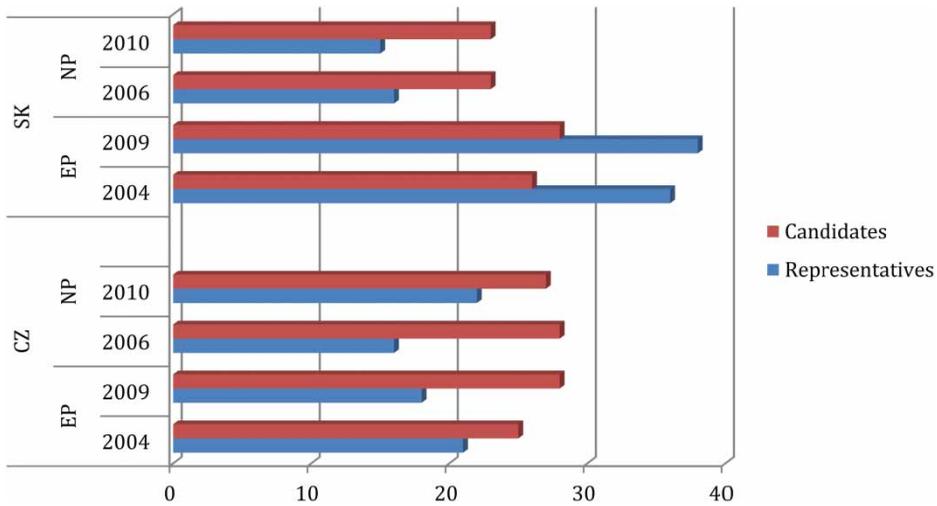


Figure 3. Women candidates and women representatives in Czech and Slovak NP and delegation to the EP (%)

Source: Czech Statistical Office (2011); Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2011).

Table 3. Percentage of female candidates and women representatives in Czech national parliament and delegation to the EP

	% Female (number of women)		Ratios	
	Candidates	Representatives	Ratio of percentages	Ratio of numbers
EP 2004	25 (203)	21 (5)	0.84	40.6
NP 2006	28 (1383)	16 (31)	0.57	44.61
EP 2009	28 (199)	18 (4)	0.64	49.75
NP 2010	27 (1364)	22 (44)	0.81	31

Source: Authors.

elections than in elections to the Slovak NP. The ratio of the percentage of women candidates to that of women representatives is twice as high in SOEs as compared to FOEs in Slovakia (Table 4). On the other hand, the situation in the Czech Republic was similar across SOEs and FOEs. A similar percentage of women candidates on ballots for EP and national elections resulted in a similar percentage of women representatives in the NP as well as the EP. The highest ratio of women candidates to women representatives was in the 2004 EP elections (Table 3).

We also report the ratios of number of candidates to representatives. This can be interpreted as the number of women candidates required for one woman to become representative (last column of Tables 3 and 4). It is inverse than is the measure of success rate of women candidates, i.e., the probability that women candidate will become representative in given election. We can see that while in Czech Republic the ratios are rather similar across different orders of elections, in Slovakia SOEs are clearly characterized by lower ratio of women candidates to women representatives (i.e., higher success rate).

Table 4. Percentage of female candidates and women representatives in Slovak national parliament and delegation to the EP

	% Female (number of women)		Ratios	
	Candidates	Representatives	Ratio of percentages	Ratio of numbers
EP 2004	26 (49)	36 (5)	1.38	9.8
NP 2006	23 (532)	16 (24)	0.70	22.17
EP 2009	28 (52)	38 (5)	1.36	10.4
NP 2010	23 (539)	15 (23)	0.65	23.43

Source: Authors.

Taken together, the expectation that women candidates will have more positions on the ballots for EP elections than for national parliamentary elections was supported in Slovakia. On the other hand, women as candidates have a roughly balanced number of positions on ballots for European as well as national parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic. As far as the expectation that women candidates have better prospects of getting elected in SOEs is concerned, this was again the case in Slovakia where women clearly have better chances of electoral success when standing in EP elections. In the Czech Republic, on the other hand, women candidates have similar chance of getting elected in SOEs as well as in FOEs. In sum, the case of Slovakia clearly supports our expectations derived from the SOE model that political parties to put forward less traditional slates of candidates, and thus, women candidates have more and better ranking on ballot lists as well as better chances of getting elected in SOEs compared to FOEs. No such pattern was observed in the Czech Republic.³

Understanding the Variance between the Countries: The MSSD

Because our expectations were confirmed in Slovakia but not in the Czech Republic and considering both countries to be systems that are (or appear to be) similar, this section applies the MSSD in order to shed light on the potential source of the observed variation in the analysed phenomenon between the two countries. In the MSSD we choose as objects of research systems that are as similar as possible, except with regard to the phenomenon under analysis, the logic for which is to keep constant as many extraneous variables as possible (Anckar, 2008).

Two theoretical implications follow from the application of the MSSD: (1) the factors that are common to the countries are irrelevant in understanding the variance in the analysed phenomenon; (2) any variables that differentiate these systems is equally likely to be the source of the observed variation in the analysed phenomenon among the countries (Przeworski & Teune, 1970). In practice, the requirement that all contesting variables are kept constant presupposes either that the theoretical framework is fairly well developed or that we choose countries geographically and culturally close to each other (Anckar, 2008). In the present case, both of these requirements are met since Czechs and Slovaks are nations that shared common state for the most of the last century, making them culturally, geographically and also politically close to each other.

Furthermore, the theoretical framework concerning representation of women is fairly well developed. Representation of women in legislatures is usually conceptualised on

the basis of the supply and demand model (Norris & Lovenduski, 1995). The supply and demand model suggests that the number of women elected is the combined result of: (a) the qualifications of women as a group to run for political office; and (b) the willingness of party elites to select female candidates. The relationship between supply and demand, in turn, is mediated by the structure of opportunities in the political marketplace that is set by the legal regulations, party system, political institutions, and political culture (Norris, 1997). Moreover, it has been argued that dynamics of supply and demand are shaped by the broader cultural and political context (Inglehart & Norris, 2003; Krook, 2010) or, as Tremblay (2007, p. 9) puts it, that ‘cultural, socioeconomic and political factors interact to create a dynamic that acts as a global incubator for the election of women’. It is thus necessary to look for differences in among these variables in order to understand the variance between the two countries in representation of women in SOEs.

First of all, selecting geographically and culturally close systems when applying the MSSD shall ensure keeping constant as many extraneous variables as possible. In this way, these variables cannot intervene in the relation between the independent and the dependent variable. In our case, the application of the MSSD therefore shall account for cultural variables such as prevalence of deep-seated gender stereotypes that define women primarily as mothers and wives that prevail in the post-communist region (Clavero & Galligan, 2005), the length of women’s enfranchisement (Stockemer, 2007), the role of international actors and the EU (MacRae, 2012; Paxton et al., 2006) and similar arguments. We have identified several theoretical variables for the analysis. These variables are the following: district magnitude, preferential voting, centralisation of candidate selection, parties’ internal policies, party ideology, and size of national legislature.

As argued above, both countries use some kind of PR system with a possibility of preferential-voting and rank-ordered ballot list system in FOEs and SOEs.⁴ Moreover, large district magnitudes have been found to have positive impact on women’s representation (Rule, 1987). In Slovakia there is actually larger district magnitude in national than in EP elections, while there is less women in national parliament than in the EP. In the Czech Republic, district magnitudes are similar across FOEs and SOEs. The differences in district magnitudes thus cannot explain the variation in women’s representation across Czech and Slovak EP elections. In addition, both countries use essentially the same electoral system in both FOEs and SOEs and there is no evidence that the use PR explains the higher representation of women in Slovakian EP elections.

The electoral laws of both countries offer the opportunity of preferential voting. It is thus necessary to look on the impact of preferential voting on representation of women since preferential voting can have either a favourable or an adverse effect on women’s representation. The analyses of preferential voting in national and EP election in both countries show that preferential voting had minimal impact on the outcome of these elections and that it has neither a favourable nor an adverse effect on women’s representation since roughly balanced number of male and female candidate were propelled towards the top of the ballot list (Klíma, 2010, p. 15; Lebeda, 2007; Linek & Outlý, 2006; Macháček, 2009). Particularly because of the institutional setting, the system of preferential voting has only limited influence over how gets elected (Spáč, 2011) and the initial order of ballot list is rather immutable (Kunovich, 2003). In fact, Chiva (2012) found stronger favourable effect of preferential voting on women’s representation in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic but only in the 2009 EP election and not in the 2004 EP elections.

Put differently, preferential voting variable can explain difference in women's representation in EP elections between the countries to only a limited extent and only concerning the 2009 EP elections.

Parties are the primary gatekeepers to elected office in these countries as much as it is the case for western EU member states (Bitušíková, 2005; Kunovich, 2003). It has been argued that the decentralisation of candidate selection process favours (s)election of women (Norris & Lovenduski, 1995). In their analysis of candidate selection procedures in the Czech Republic, Linek and Outlý (2006) show that candidate selection procedures do not differ significantly across first- and second-order elections. Unfortunately, to the best author's knowledge there is no similar analysis of candidate selection procedures of Slovakian parties. Nonetheless, in her study of women's representation in Slovak 2010 national parliamentary elections, Hellová (2010) argued that the more decentralized process of recruitment in a party is not positively related with better outcome for women candidates. We can thus assume that the level of centralisation of candidate selection is not the decisive factor explaining the lower representation of women in Czech EP elections.

Moreover, political parties may have different internal policies (quotas, fast-track selection etc.) addressing the issue of women's representation. The introduction of gender quotas by political parties is generally considered to be among crucial variables influencing women's representation (McAllister & Studlar, 2002). In looking at the introduction of specific internal policies to promote representation of women among Czech and Slovak parties, it can be concluded that only two analysed Czech political parties introduced voluntary gender quotas, i.e., the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) and the Greens (SZ). The Czech Social Democrats have set a 25% quota system but it only concerns its internal structures and does not apply to ballot lists. The Greens are the only Czech political party applying gender quotas (parity) concerning ballot lists (Forest, 2005).⁵⁶

In Slovakia during the analysed period, there were three parties using some form of internal gender policies, i.e., the Alliance of the New Citizen (ANO), the Slovak Communist Party (KSS) and the People's Party – Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (L'S–HZDS). The ANO applies an informal 33% quota for women; the KSS shall have at least one woman among the eight first candidates, and the L'S–HZDS requires that gender parity is achieved when placing candidates on a ballot list (Mesežnikov & Gyárfášová, 2006). In both countries, parties applying some type of gender quotas use them for both national and EP elections and thus this variable cannot explain the higher representation of women in Slovakian EP elections. Latly, both countries could have introduced national quotas but, in practice, neither the Czech Republic nor Slovakia uses any constitutional or legal gender quotas (Freidenvall, 2005; Quota project, 2010).

Turning to party ideology, it plays an important role in women's political representation. It has been shown in Europe that parties on the left send more women to national legislature as well to the EP (Kantola, 2010; Kittilson, 2006). The analysis of the impact of left-right placement on the selection of women in post-communist countries concludes that although leftist parties tend to recruit more women in EP elections than parties of the right, the impact of left-right placement is not statistically significant (Chiva, 2012, p. 19). A brief look at the Appendices 1 and 2 supports this conclusion. It rather seems that in Slovakia parties across the spectrum made an effort to recruit more women in SOEs than in FOEs while Czech parties recruited similar number of women to both SOEs and FOEs. In addition, same relevant political parties run for national and EP elections in both countries.

Left-right placement variable hence does not explain the difference in representation of women in EP elections between the countries.

Political parties in EU member state not only compete on the basis of the left-right dimension of contestation but also on the basis European integration dimension (Marks & Steenbergen, 2002). Consequently, it is necessary to look at parties' placement on European integration dimension to rule ideological variables at once. Several studies argue that pro-EU parties are far more likely to recruit women for EP elections than Eurosceptic parties (Chiva, 2012, p. 15; Meserve et al., 2009). In fact, Czech Republic has acquired the status of the most Eurosceptic Central and Eastern European (CEE) country both at the mass level and the political party level (Kopecký & Mudde, 2002). Among CEE countries, Czech Republic and Poland are the only ones where major Eurosceptic political parties win representation in the national and European parliament (Beichelt, 2004; Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2008). On the other hand, no major Eurosceptic political party win representation in both European and national parliament. Moreover, Slovakian support for membership in the EU is also higher at the mass level (European Commission, 2010). Since the level of Euroscepticism differentiates these two countries, it is likely to be, at least partially, the source of the variation in women's representation in EP elections between the countries.

Last, it has been argued that the size of national legislature affects parties' recruitment of women for EP elections (Meserve et al., 2009). Meserve et al. (2009) argue that parties in countries with larger national legislatures tend to recruit fewer women for EP elections. In contrast, parties in countries with numerically smaller parliaments tend to nominate more women candidates for EP elections. In practice, there is a relatively small difference in number of MPs in Czech and Slovak national parliaments. In the Czech Republic, the Chamber of Deputies consists of 200 MPs while the Slovak National Council consists of 150 MPs. Accordingly, EP elections shall favour the selection of women in Slovakia more than in the Czech Republic. The difference in numerical size of legislatures is not, however, very significant and its effect on the selection of women is perhaps limited. On the other hand, it is not possible to rule out the impact of differing size of national legislatures on political parties' legislative recruitment of women.

Conclusions and Discussion

In this paper, we attempted to apply the SOE model to women's descriptive representation in elections to the EP and choose the Czech Republic and Slovakia as cases. Drawing on electoral data related to women's representation, we show that women candidates have more positions and better ranking on ballot lists (equality of opportunities) as well as better chances of getting elected (equality of results) when running in SOEs in Slovakia. There are generally more women on ballots for SOEs; they have better positions on these ballots and thus better chances of being (s)elected. In contrast, the expectations were not verified and the results were mixed in the Czech case. In the Czech Republic, women have roughly same opportunities to be (s)elected to political office in both FOEs and SOEs.

Because the results regarding women's representation differed in EP elections in the two countries and because the two countries represent systems that are similar in many aspects, the MSSD was applied in order to shed light on potential sources of the difference in women's representation in EP elections between both countries. From the MSSD, it appears that three variables have the potential to explain this difference: parties' positions

on European integration dimension, the numerical size of national legislature, and preferential voting. Since the latter two variables have arguably only limited effect on the higher representation of women in Slovak than in Czech EP elections, it may be assumed that the third variable, parties' positions on European integration, is the source of the observed variation in women's representation in SOEs between the two countries. Eurosceptic parties are far less likely to recruit women for EP elections than pro-EU parties. Given that the Czech Republic is characterized by considerable public and party system Euroscepticism, it may be assumed that it is this variable that explains the difference in women's representation in SOEs between the countries. Moreover, a fruitful avenue for future research is to test the effects of preferential voting and the size of national legislature on women's representation in EP elections in more detail and across wider spectrum of countries.

In her recent analysis of recruitment of women for EP elections in post-communist states, Chiva (2012, p. 27) argue that pro-EU parties tend to incorporate the EU's normative discourse on gender equality in their programmes and/or strategies in EP elections, while Eurosceptic parties are likely to reject EU'-level norms on gender equality, either because they consider them incompatible with national traditions or, alternatively, see perceive them as essentially an EU import, reflecting the dominant liberal ethos of the EU. She argues that pro-EU parties take into consideration EU's gender equality discourse when selecting candidates for EP elections since it may be a low-cost strategy for political parties willing to establish themselves as credible partners within the European political arena. On the other hand, Eurosceptic parties resist EU's gender equality discourse and norms when recruiting candidates for EP elections for the abovementioned reasons (Chiva, 2012, p. 4).

Alternatively, because pro-EU political parties perceive EP elections as SOEs they may consider nomination of higher number of women as a low-cost strategy to establish themselves as credible partners within the European political arena. Since these parties keep EU issues of the agenda and do not perceive the EP as an effective site of political power, adhering to EU's gender equality discourse may indeed be a low-cost strategy to establish themselves as credible partners within the European political arena. On the other hand, Eurosceptic political parties emphasise European integration issue and either oppose the very idea of European or oppose the EU's current or future planned trajectory (Taggart & Szczerbiak, 2002). In other words, they try to mobilize voters on the basis of EU issues and hence politicise EP elections (Hobolt & Spoon, 2012). These parties thus may consider the EP to be an effective site of power to contest the EU. In this way, EP elections may become less second-order in the eyes of these parties at least when it comes to selecting candidates for these contests. Put differently, the SOE model holds more when the contestation of EP elections by political parties is low. On the other hand, when political parties oppose the EU and hence politicise and contest EP election, the applicability of the SOE model decreases.

Notes

¹ In the countries under analysis (i.e., the Czech Republic and Slovakia), this condition is satisfied, as both types of elections were fought within almost identical party systems.

² In elections to the EP as well as NP, Czech voters may use as many as two preferential votes (Parliament of the Czech Republic 1995, 2003a). In EP elections, Slovak voters may use as many as two preferential votes,

whereas they may use up to four preferential votes in national parliamentary elections (National Council of the Slovak Republic 2003b, 2004).

- ³ We also performed the statistical tests of the differences. In case of Slovakia, we can strongly reject (with p-values <0.05) the null hypothesis of equality of the means in favor of alternative hypothesis that the mean is higher in SOEs. For Czech Republic the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Nevertheless, the reader should keep in mind, that due to the structure of our data, the statistical results cannot be taken strongly.
- ⁴ Given that we are concerned only with the comparison of aggregate (country) levels of women representation across SOEs and FOEs, we do not report individual party-level results here. Nevertheless, Appendices 1 and 2 provide an overview of party-level results so that an interested reader can get some knowledge of party-level trends in women representation across SOEs and FOEs in both countries.
- ⁵ The only notable difference between the electoral systems used concern the number of constituencies in the Czech Republic (14 in national and 1 in EP elections) and method for allocating seats (Droop formula for Slovak EP elections and Hagenbach-Bischoff method for national elections and D'Hondt method form both elections in the Czech Republic.
- ⁶ Both parties however use their informal gender policies for national and EP elections.

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Appendix 1. Women candidates by party (%)

Country	Political party	2004 (EP)	2006 (NP) ^b	Difference ^a	2009 (EP)	2010 (NP) ^b	Difference ^a
CZ	ČSSD	19	27	8	21	22	1
	KDU–ČSL	25*	20	-5	34*	30*	-4
	KSČM	19	26	7	44	30**	-14
	ODS	13	23	10	14	23	9
	SNK–ED	28	28*	0	—	—	—
	Suverenita (SZR)	—	—	—	48*	40***	-8
	Svobodní	22	—	—	4	14	10
	SZ	50	36*	-14	48	39*	-9
	SZR	44	27	-17	—	—	—
	TOP 09	—	—	—	—	26*	—
	US–DEU/ULD	28*	28*	—	—	—	—
	VV	—	—	—	56*	32*	-24
	SK	ANO	57	33	-24	—	—
KSS		29	17	-12	17	16	-1
KDH		21*	17	-4	15	23	8
LD–HZDS		36	30	-6	38	25	-13
MOST–HÍD		—	—	—	—	19	19
OKS		0	22	22	—	—	—
SaS		—	—	—	23	18	-5
SF		43	32*	-11	—	—	—
SDKÚ		21	23	2	25	15*	-10
SLS		0	2	2	—	—	—
SNS		—	—	—	8	13	5
SMER		29*	17	-12	38	19	-19
SDL		—	—	—	31	23	-8
SMK–MKP		18*	13	-5	15*	15	0
Mean		26	23	-3	28	23	-3
Standard deviation		14	8	—	15	7	—

Source: Czech Statistical Office (2011); Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2011).

Notes: (a) Shows the difference between national parliament and EP elections. Positive values indicate higher percentage of women in national parliamentary elections. Negative values indicate the opposite. (b) Values for national parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic are, for comparative reasons, counted using three constituencies with similar district magnitude as for the EP elections. These are Hlavní město Praha (Prague); Jihomoravský kraj (South Moravian Region), and Moravskoslezský kraj (Moravian–Silesian Region). The values are averages of these three constituencies. CZ: ČSSD = Česká strana sociálně demokratická; KDU–ČSL = Křesťanská demokratická unie – Česká strana lidová; KSČM = Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy; NEZ = Nezávislý; ODS = Občanská demokratická strana; SNK–ED = Sdružení nezávislých kandidátů – Evropsští demokraté; SZ = Strana zelených; SZR = Strana zdravého rozumu; TOP09 = Tradice, odpovědnost, prosperita 09; US–DEU = Unie svobody – Demokratická unie; VV = Věci veřejné. SK: ANO = Aliancia nového občana; KSS = Komunistická strana Slovenska; KDH = Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie; LD–HZDS = Ľudová strana – Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko; OKS = Občianska konzervatívna strana; SaS = Sloboda a Solidarita; SF = Slobodné fórum; SDKÚ = Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia; SLS = Slovenská ľudová strana; SNS = Slovenská národná strana; SDL = Strana demokratickej ľavice; SMK–MKP = Strana maďarskej koalície – Magyar Koalíció Pártja.

Appendix 2. Women representatives by party (%)

Country	Political party	2004 (EP)	2006 (NP)	Difference ^a	2009 (EP)	2010 (NP)	Difference ^a
CZ	ČSSD	0	8	8	29	5	-24
	KDU-ČSL	50	0	-50	50	--	--
	KSČM	17	50	33	0	50	50
	NEZ	50	--	--	--	--	--
	ODS	11	17	6	11	21	10
	SNK-ED	33	--	--	--	--	--
	Suverenita (SZR)	--	--	--	--	--	--
	Svobodní	--	--	--	--	--	--
	SZ	--	50	--	--	--	--
	SZR	--	--	--	--	--	--
	TOP 09	--	--	--	--	40	--
	US-DEU/ULD	--	--	--	--	--	--
	VV	--	--	--	--	33	--
SK	ANO	--	--	--	--	--	--
	KSS	--	--	--	--	--	--
	KDH	33	14	-19	50	13	-37
	LD-HZDS	33	27	-6	0	--	--
	MOST-HÍD	--	--	--	--	11	--
	OKS	--	--	--	--	--	--
	SaS	--	--	--	--	18	--
	DF	--	--	--	--	--	--
	SDKÚ	33	20	-13	0	21	--
	SLS	--	--	--	--	--	--
	SNS	--	15	--	0	11	11
	SMER	33	12	-21	60	16	-44
	SDL	--	--	--	--	--	--
SMK-MKP	50	15	-35	50	--	--	
Mean		31	21	-11	25	22	-6
Standard deviation		16	16	--	25	13	--

Source: Czech Statistical Office (2011); Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (2011).

Notes: (a) Shows the difference between national parliament and EP elections. Positive values indicate higher percentage of women in national parliamentary elections. Negative values indicate the opposite. (b) Values for national parliamentary elections in the Czech Republic are, for comparative reasons, counted using three constituencies with similar district magnitude as for the EP elections. These are Hlavní město Praha (Prague); Jihomoravský kraj (South Moravian Region), and Moravskoslezský kraj (Moravian-Silesian Region). The values are averages of these three constituencies. CZ: ČSSD = Česká strana sociálně demokratická; KDU-ČSL = Křesťanská demokratická unie – Česká strana lidová; KSČM = Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy; NEZ = Nezávislý; ODS = Občanská demokratická strana; SNK-ED = Sdružení nezávislých kandidátů – Evropská demokratická; SZ = Strana zelených; SZR = Strana zdravého rozumu; TOP09 = Tradice, odpovědnost, prosperita 09; US-DEU = Unie svobody – Demokratická unie; VV = Věci veřejné. SK: ANO = Aliancia nového občana; KSS = Komunistická strana Slovenska; KDH = Kresťanskodemokratické hnutie; LD-HZDS = Ľudová strana – Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko; OKS = Občianska konzervatívna strana; SaS = Sloboda a Solidarita; SF = Slobodné fórum; SDKÚ = Slovenská demokratická a kresťanská únia; SLS = Slovenská ľudová strana; SNS = Slovenská národná strana; SDL = Strana demokratickej ľavice; SMK-MKP = Strana maďarskej koalície – Magyar Koalíció Pártja.