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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Miami, Florida

GENDER POLITICS AND POLICIES IN POST-COMMUNIST DEMOCRACIES

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

POLITICAL SCIENCE

by

Vera Nikolaevna Beloshitzkaya

2020

To: Dean John F. Stack, Jr.
    Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs

This dissertation, written by Vera Nikolaevna Beloshitzkaya, and entitled Gender Politics and Policies in Post-Communist Democracies, having been approved in respect to style and intellectual content, is referred to you for judgment.

We have read this dissertation and recommend that it be approved.

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Date of Defense: March 12, 2020

The dissertation of Vera Nikolaevna Beloshitzkaya is approved.

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Steven J. Green School of Internationals and Public Affairs

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Andrés G. Gil
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
and Dean of the University Graduate School

Florida International University, 2020

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my son, Gerald,

my mother, Liudmila,

my grandparents, Galina and Nikolai,

and my adopted grandparents,

Lorraine and Ed.

This dissertation would have not been possible without your

love and support.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

GENDER POLITICS AND POLICIES

IN POST-COMMUNIST DEMOCRACIES

by

Vera Nikolaevna Beloshitzkaya

Florida International University, 2020

Miami, Florida

Professor Tatiana Kostadinova, Major Professor

The dissertation investigates why variation exists in gender policies that challenge traditional power hierarchies across central and eastern European (CEE) countries and the role of political parties in this process. I first ask how gender issues get onto party agendas and then test whether parties in government that have campaigned on gender issues ultimately deliver on their promises. I examine three policy domains, marginally affected by the EU and international "soft" norms, affirmative action in the labor market, father's leave, and anti-domestic violence policies.

I argue that parties are least responsive when it comes to altering gender power hierarchies at the intimate level due to the post-totalitarian legacy, fluid nature of intimate relations, and absent history of regulation of this sphere by liberal states. They are most responsive when enacting policies in the public sphere.

My argument rests on original empirical data of party statements on gender issues in eight post-communist democracies during 1990-2015 years collected through human content analysis. This data collection has resulted in the database of CEE party positions on gender issues with over 2,000 pieces of data. Using multivariate regression analysis, I

later use these data to I test whether parties deliver on their promises and what role movements play.

My findings suggest that CEE parties not only fulfill their electoral mandates on policy issues that are located in public (affirmative action in the labor market) and semi-private space (father's leave), they also conceive of these mandates broadly. Yet, when the issue belongs within intimate space of human relations, such as domestic violence, governing parties require the presence of strong feminist movements in order to fulfill promises.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BSP — Bulgarian Socialist Party

CEE — Central and Eastern Europe(an) or Central and Eastern Europe

DOM — Democratic Renewal of Macedonia

DP — Labor Party (Lithuania)

DUI — Democratic Union for Integration (North Macedonia)

EU — European Union

GERB — Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria

HDZ — Croatian Democratic Union

ILO — International Labor Organization

IMF — International Monetary Fund

IMRO — International Macedonian Revolutionary Organization

IOs — International organizations

IR — International relations

KSČM — Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia

LSDP — Lithuanian Social Democratic Party

LVŽS — Lithuanian Peasants and Greens Union

ML — Centre Movement for Lithuania

NGO — Non-governmental organization

PES — Party of European Socialists

PSDP — Party of Social Democracy of Romania

SDP — Social Democratic Party (the Czech Republic)

SZ	Green Party (the Czech Republic)
TOP09	Tradition, Responsibility, Prosperity
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organization

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. The puzzle

Despite a woman's right to be protected from intimate partner violence, Bulgarian legislators have refused to ratify the European Council's Convention against preventing and combating violence against women (the Istanbul Convention). Korneliya Ninova, the leader of the *Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP)*, has openly challenged the agenda of the *Party of the European Socialists* that strives to protect women from intimate partner violence. The official EU remains silent on the issue, given that no comprehensive EU directive exists in this policy area. The Istanbul Convention (2011) has generated much controversy in other Central European nations, namely, Poland, Croatia, and Latvia, where governments are reluctant to ratify it and affirm their commitment to protect women from domestic violence.

At the same time, the issue of gender equality has received a lot of attention in the European public sphere and has the full might of the EU legislation behind it. The EU has explicit directives that protect women from labor market discrimination, forbid sexual harassment, and require member states to adopt policies that will promote work-life balance, such as parental leaves and flexible working hours. However, what is rarely acknowledged in the literature (outside of the feminist scholarship) is that this legislation remains minimalist in nature. For instance, it does not require member states to adopt father's leave or engage in substantive gender equality promotion in the labor market.

Yet, Croatia, Bulgaria, North Macedonia,[1] and the Czech Republic have included affirmative action clauses into anti-discrimination legislation, while Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and Romania have not. The adoption of father's leave in Poland and Bulgaria but not in the Czech Republic[2] remains puzzling as well.

In a first attempt to assess the developments of gender policies in the CEE region, many feminist scholars note that gender policy reforms across the region bear the mark of "neo-traditionalism" (Johnson and Robinson 2007) which they link to the communist gender policies and practices of the communist past (also see Haney and Pollard 2003; Moghadam et al. 1993; Racioppi and O'Sullivan See 2009). In other words, according to the feminist scholars, all gender policies in the region reinforce traditional gender roles. Namely, they emphasize that a woman's role in society is reduced to being a mother. They also note that many women's concerns, such as domestic violence or bodily integrity, get privatized. If these arguments are valid, however, one would expect to see uniformity in policy choices across the post-communist world, which is not the case, as shown above. Another strand of scholars link any achievements in the legislative promotion of women's rights to the role the EU plays in the region (Avdeyeva 2015; Montoya 2013) as well as to the feminist movement mobilization (Johnson and Brunell 2006; Htun and Weldon 2018), but limited studies focus both on the CEE region and a variety of gender policy domains.

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[1] Though Macedonia became North Macedonia only in 2018, I will use the official name at the time of writing throughout the manuscript.

[2] Father's leave was adopted in the Czech Republic in 2018, but it is beyond the period of observation.

What is more, the literature often examines different gender issues[3] separately. This have created large bodies of knowledge on gendered welfare states, violence against women, women in politics and leadership, but these traditions are rarely in conversation with one another. This masks the variation in actors that drive policy adoption in a given issue area, as recent research by Htun and Weldon (2018) suggests. One crucial actor in particular remains overlooked in the realm of gender policies that seek to challenge and transform gender roles, particularly in the CEE. This actor is political parties.

Thus, the key questions this study seeks to address are the following:

1) What explains variation in the CEE government policies seeking to challenge traditional gender roles?

2) What role do political parties and feminist movements play in this process?

3) Which parties, left or right, own women's rights issues in the CEE regions?

4) Are parties responsive when it comes to gender policies that seek to challenge gender roles?

2. The argument

In a democratic polity, especially in parliamentary democracies that many CEE countries are, political parties are the key political actors that link voters and policies. By competing in the electoral marketplace, political parties showcase the issues they advocate, thus soliciting votes in support of their position. I argue that parties are not free to pick and choose the issues they align with without hurting their "brand". Therefore, I expect some degree of congruency between ideology and issue ownership.

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[3] Though gender is a broader concept than women's rights, I use gender issues and women's rights interchangeably in this study.

Further, democratic responsiveness theory posits that once elected, parties in the government get a mandate to translate their campaign promises into policies, regardless of the issue at hand, thus making democratic responsiveness theory essentially gender blind. I, nevertheless, suggest that there will be variation in policy responsiveness based on where an issue falls on the public-intimate continuum. I contend that the feminist concept of the private has to be split into semi-private and intimate spaces to more accurately reflect the nature of human relations in each of them and the history of government action in each space. I then suggest that the governments in which parties have campaigned on women's rights promotion will act responsively in public and semi-private space but will be reluctant to interfere in the intimate space. I attribute this protection of the intimate space to the post-totalitarian past as well as the absence of the history of regulation of the intimate by the liberal state. If parties were to give promises and then to enact policies based on these promises in the most intimate sphere, their electoral success could be at stake. It is likely then that post-communist parties will remain silent on the issue and feminist NGOs will continue to matter for any gender policy that seeks to transform the intimate power hierarchies.

3. Conceptualization of gender issues

For the purposes of this study, I conceptualize gender issues as symbolic[4] gender issues. Symbolic gender issues largely concern a) the recognition of structural inequalities that women experience as a group and b) a challenge to the existing gender

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[4] Htun and Weldon (2018) call them "status" gender issues. Nancy Fraser (2013, 191) identifies them as belonging within the realm of politics of recognition.

roles that present women as carers and men as breadwinners. Subsequently, the policies will be symbolic gender policies.

Symbolic gender issues are different from the redistributive gender issues in that they are not directly related to the socio-economic class and, thus, are not easily remedied through redistributive policies. This distinction, however imperfect, allows for a more nuanced analysis of the actors that drive policy change to improve the position of women as a group. It also prevents the possible cross-contamination with the redistributive issues of welfare state expansion, which can be driven by different sets of actors and different policy goals in mind, as Htun and Weldon (2018) suggest.

I specifically focus on three issue areas – affirmative action in the labor market, father's leave, and protection against domestic violence. These issue areas challenge traditional women's roles as mothers, wives, and homemakers and either seek to support women in combining these roles with the presence in the public sphere by reframing the existing gender roles (affirmative action and father's leave) or seek to remedy the injustice of domestic violence that affects women as a group.

All these issues can also be viewed as challenging familialism and traditionalism in policy discourse. Familialism means state support for traditional gender roles of male breadwinner and female caregiver (Morgan 2006). It can also be defined as an essentialist view on women as women-mothers, not mother-workers (True 2003, 59). What is more, privatization of women's issues, such as domestic violence or childcare, are also often seen as traditionalist (Haney 2002) because they reinforce the existing familial patriarchal structures of domination and power imbalance and limit the set of options available to a woman to protect her bodily integrity and her rights.

Therefore, non-traditionalist positions on symbolic gender issues involve, first and foremost, support for women to actively participate in the public sphere through becoming a worker or a worker-mother as well as an active recognition of the unequal status of women in the labor market and affirmative action to rectify this state of affairs. Second, it involves the recognition of the active role of a male in the family when it comes to caregiving and reproduction. Third, it includes a recognition that a woman within a family unit remains an individual with a human right to bodily autonomy and human dignity and that a state plays a role in assisting a woman in protecting her dignity and bodily autonomy in spite of the long-standing tradition of female subordination to the desires of her male intimate partner and toleration of violence against women in the family as well as the contestation of the frame that women's rights are human rights frame (Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens 2007, 109-132; Libal and Parekh 2009).

4. Existing scholarship

The present study contributes to two large bodies of literature that have been developing in parallel fashion – research on the CEE political parties and research on women's rights promotion in the region. I discuss these contributions below.

4.1. Scholarship on the CEE party system institutionalization

Research on political parties in CEE has proceeded across two dimensions; with much of it remaining silent on the role political parties play in women's rights promotion. Two debates have taken place in the literature. The first debate concerns the predictive power of partisan theory for parties in the region. Empirical studies have found that left means right in the post-communist context (Tavits and Letki 2009). The second broader debate centers on party system institutionalization and the degree of policy

responsiveness in new democracies, even though these studies still remain far and few in between.

After the fall of communism, new democracies have been tasked with the creation of party systems that will aggregate and channel policy preferences and values of their voters into policies as well as engage in a difficult task of economic transition and political institution building. In many countries, party systems have been built around the parties that existed before the communist period. This, however, has not prevented extensive party proliferation. Though the number of new parties drops gradually as democracies age, as of 2007, there has not been an election in the CEE without a new party (Tavits 2008). Populist parties have been emerging in late 2000s. Pop-Eleches (2010) calls them "unorthodox" and argues that they have appeared due to the inability of the mainstream parties to successfully address the challenges of transition and post-accession and limited policy divergence among them.

This means that CEE party systems are still characterized by weak party system institutionalization[5] (Mainwaring and Torcal 2006; Pop-Eleches 2010; Webb and White 2007), though the degree varies by country, with stronger party system institutionalization observed in the Czech Republic (Kitschelt et al. 1999; Webb and White 2007). The weakness of the party system institutionalization is directly related to the ability of a party to foster programmatic linkages with its voters and to build a well-recognizable ideological identity that would allow its supporters to predict which issues and policies a given party advocates. Weak party system institutionalization, thus, is the

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[5] Party system institutionalization encompasses three dimensions: "party connections with the electorate, the development of party organizations over time, and party performance on behalf of the wider political system (including governance)" (Webb and White 2007, 11).

main reason of why partisan theory may not travel well to the post-communist region and why it is hard to infer party policy positions from their proclaimed ideological label.

Although studies that examine whether a party ideology is a significant predictor of a gender issues ownership in the CEE are non-existent, a large body of literature has focused its attention on the alignment between ideology and economic and social policies. Particular attention has been paid to the role left parties play in social policy and redistribution in CEE, and empirical results have been mixed. Some scholars show that left parties in post-communist democracies behave similarly to the left parties in established democracies by expanding social policies (Cook, Orenstein, and Rueschemeyer 1999). In addition, Careja and Emmenegger (2009) also analyze the effect of the left parties in Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia between 1993 and 2002 and find a positive association between left parties and increases in social spending, but no effect on education expenditure.

Other scholars, nevertheless, contend that "left is right" in the post-communist context (Tavits and Letki 2009) when it comes to social spending. These researchers attribute this unusual finding to the politics of transition being different from the "politics as usual" in established democracies that partisan theory describes. Similarly, Lipsmeyer (2002), using panel data from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Poland that span 1989-1996, demonstrates that in the post-communist transitional context, right parties in the government may very well engage in social policy expansion (pensions in her case) if it helps them to mask broader liberal structural changes. Overall,

based on these divergent results, it is hard to assess the degree of party system institutionalization at the electoral and legislative level.

At the same time, scholars who work on democratic responsiveness in post-communist region have been more optimistic to suggest an increased party system institutionalization due to parties being responsive on a variety of policy issues. Yet, the findings have also been mixed and often issue-dependent (Kostadinova and Kostadinova 2016; Lipsmeyer 2009; Roberts 2010). For instance, on the one hand, Lipsmeyer (2009) demonstrates mandate fulfillment in the realm of economic policy. On the other hand, Roberts (2010) reports only limited mandate fulfillment in the same policy domain and links it to the constrained policy-making environment that has been a function of international integration and loan agreements. He contends that parties that have made electoral promises to slow the speed of economic reforms have often found themselves unable to do so due to the large costs associated with breaking international obligations (86-87). Kostadinova and Kostadinova (2016) report promise fulfillment in the areas of democratization, welfare spending, and education. No study to my knowledge has examined policy responsiveness, on gender issues in the region, and this dissertation is the first step to fill this gap. I define policy responsiveness as an alignment between a position party takes in its electoral Manifesto on a given issue and subsequent policy adoption on the issue.

Though gender policy domain and gender issues more broadly have been overlooked in the literature on party system institutionalization in the region, it has partially been addressed by the qualitative scholarship, which has appeared in mostly edited volumes, on the role of women in CEE politics – their recruitment, their

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representation, and their interest promotion (Matland and Montgomery 2003; Rueschemeyer 1998; Rueschemeyer and Wolchik 2009).[6] This literature does not believe that parties have been a significant political actor behind the promotion of women's rights in the region (Avdeyeva 2015, 95; Einhorn 2006, 53; Kostelecky 2002, 117; Rueschemeyer 1998). This is what Marilyn Rueschemeyer writes: "We observe that the expectations and worries of large numbers of women are considered relatively unimportant and that they are not even addressed by most of the major political parties" (1998, 286). "It is still far from standard procedures for gender issues to be included in political party programs", claims Barbara Einhorn (2006, 53). Thus, there is a need to fill this gap in the literature and to systematically examine if parties, indeed, have not addressed the concerns of women, despite all the hardships post-communist women have endured. There is also a need to evaluate whether any of these commitments translate into public policies. Thus, to fill this void, the present study empirically examines the actual parties' statements and pledges on symbolic gender issues and how they translate into policies as well as theorizes the expectations for such translation to occur, which neither democratic responsiveness theory nor feminist scholarship have been able to fully explain.

4.2. Scholarship on women's rights promotion

Scholarship that explicitly addresses women's rights promotion in the region exists both within comparative politics subfield of gender and politics and within international relations subfield on international norm diffusion that emphasizes the role of

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[6] Despite the existence of this body of scholarship, "the study of women's [interest] representation in Eastern Europe is still lacking" (Gwiazda 2019, 175).

transnational feminist networks and international organizations. These fields, however, have focused on different gender issues. While studies in comparative politics primarily examine variation in family policy (Javornik 2014; Pascall and Kwak 2005), the literature on norm diffusion has focused on gender equality promotion (Avdeyeva 2015) and gender-based violence (Montoya 2013). Htun and Weldon (2018) is a rare study that addresses multiple gender issues across multiple countries and over a number of time periods and examines the role of both international and domestic actors in women's rights promotion. Among the major factors that impede the protection of women's rights, scholars name traditionalist culture whereas women's movements and international organizations are said to contribute to their promotion. I briefly summarize these positions below.

For many feminist scholars policies that promote women's rights are the result of discursive battles over the meaning of gender (Fraser and Gordon 1994; Gradskova 2015; Haney 2002; Johnson and Robinson 2007; Kantola 2006; Verloo 2005). Variations in family and gender policies are thought to be reflections of different interpretations of the public/private division of responsibility between the state, family, and market (O'Connor et al. 1999) and the conception of women's roles in society (Hageman-White 2002). Further, Pfau-Effinger (1998) argues that variation in welfare state policies is a result of the variation in gender cultural models (i.e., societal values about correct division of labor) in Europe. She identifies six gender cultural models in Western Europe: the family economic gender model; the dual breadwinner/state carer model; the dual breadwinner/dual carer model; and the dual earner/marketized female carer. Given that all post-communist nations have had the dual breadwinner/ state carer model as their

starting point, one would need to rely on other factors to explain the variation in policies seeking to promote women's rights.

Other feminist scholars emphasize the role of patriarchal attitudes and practices of the communist past (Moghadam et al. 1993; Racioppi & O'Sullivan See 2009). For instance, Wolchik (1993) links these patriarchal attitudes to pro-natalist policies of the late communist period and continuation in the workload distribution between men and women at the individual level. Further, neoliberal ideas and practices, such as closing down or privatizing child care centers are said to have reinforced existing patriarchal views by forcing women to increase their participation in childcare and to exit the labor market (Ciechocinska 1993; Haney 2002). Other scholars, however, report that women in post-communist nations have not exited the labor market in large numbers (Popa 2007; Van Der Lippe and Fodor 1998).

Non-feminist scholars also point out to the importance of different values and beliefs about acceptable gender roles for the promotion of women's rights. In line with what feminist scholars argue, religion and past historical experiences all contribute to these mass attitudes and beliefs. Therefore, shifts in the popular attitudes towards gender equality are believed to be necessary to happen before changes in gender policy can occur (see Jugović (2016) for the case of Croatia; Motiejunaite and Kravchenko (2008) for Russia and Sweden; Szelewa (2014) for Poland). Nevertheless, attitudes usually do not directly translate into policies, unless they are channeled through democratic institutions of contestation and representation or civil society actors.

In addition, strong and independent feminist movements have also been named in the literature as the key driving factor behind government action on women's rights in

established democracies, particularly in the gender-based violence issue area (Htun and Weldon 2012; Weldon 2002) as well as beyond (Htun and Weldon 2018). Htun and Weldon (2018), analyzing countries across the globe between 1975-2005, show that strong independent movements are found behind any policy that promotes women's rights, ranging from policies that protect women from violence to the redistributive policies of maternity leave. Feminist movements have also been instrumental in promoting suffrage and political representation across the globe (Paxton and Hughes 2014). In addition, the mobilization of women's movements and women's groups and their strength has been a driving factor behind CEE countries compliance with the EU gender equality legislation (Avdeyeva 2015).

When it comes to the impact of feminist movements on gender equality policies in the region, mixed results have emerged. Qualitative case studies report a varying degree of impact of feminist movements on gender equality policies (Bulgaria: Stoykova 2007; Croatia: Dedić 2007; the Czech Republic: Röder 2007; Latvia: Putnina 2007; Lithuania: Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007; Poland: Dabrowska 2007; Romania: Popa 2007). Nevertheless, feminist movements that work specifically on domestic violence have been particularly strong and impactful in the region (ibid), although variation exists in their strength and impact as well (Johnson and Brunnell 2006; Krizsán and Popa 2010; Fábián 2010). Therefore, it appears that the effect of feminist movements may vary based on the policy domain, with the movements being the most impactful in the transformation of the intimate space of human relations. There does not exist a systematic cross-national study that assesses the impact of feminist movements on gender policies in the CEE countries.

Neither there exists a cross-national measure of the strength of these movements, which this study develops.

International relations scholarship has examined women's rights promotion as an example of international norm translation into domestic politics and the backlash against this process. Though it has been feminist movements that placed the issues of women's rights onto the agenda of international organizations (Joachim 2007), the United Nations has been instrumental in articulation and codification of international norms on women's rights. The first landmark treaty has been the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979). Then the Beijing Platform for Action followed in 1995. The United Nations begins gender mainstreaming in 1990s; the European Bank For Reconstruction and Development and OECD in 2008 (Shields and Wallin 2015). The European Union follows the suit in 2000s.

The seminal study by Keck and Sikkink (1998) argues that norm diffusion occurs through transnational advocacy networks that "may include international and domestic nongovernmental research and advocacy organizations, local social movements, foundations, the media, churches, trade unions, consumer organizations, and intellectuals, parts of regional and international intergovernmental organizations, parts of the executive and/or parliamentary branches of government" (9). Norm diffusion, according to them, occurs through the "boomerang pattern" when "domestic NGOs bypass their state and directly search out international allies to try to bring pressure on their states from outside" (12).

Alternatively, Finnimore and Sikkink (1998) have proposed a "cascade model" of norm cycle. They argue that norms evolve in a patterned "life cycle", and that different

behavioral logics dominate different segments of this cycle. The first stage is norm emergence, the second stage is norm acceptance, and the third stage is norm internalization. Different actors, motives, and mechanisms characterize change at each stage. Norm entrepreneurs play the main role at the norm emergence stage. They do so through organizational platforms. They attempt to convince a critical mass of states to embrace the norm. According to Finnemore and Sikkink (1998), a tipping point occurs when either the most critical states or 1/3 of states in the system adopt the norm. Then the mechanism of norm cascades takes place through demonstration, socialization, legitimacy, and peer-pressure. Internalization occurs when the norm is taken for granted and acted upon. The process is not inevitable and is not always successful, according to them.

Other scholars challenge this top-down approach to norm development and emphasize the importance of local agents in norm diffusion. Acharya (2004) argues that "localization, not wholesale acceptance or rejection, settles most cases of normative contestation" (241). He defines localization as a "complex process and outcome by which norm-takers build congruence between transnational norms and local beliefs and practices" (ibid). According to Acharya, only ideas that can be made congruent with local practices and beliefs and help enhance the prestige of local actors are borrowed (245-246). Acharya also identifies local conditions that are suitable for borrowing: crisis, systemic change, domestic political change, and emulation of neighbours. In other words, strong local norms cannot be easily displaced. It also requires local actors who would actively participate in norm advocacy at the local level. Keck and Sikkink (1998) also agree that it is easier to translate the norm if domestic actors are receptive to it.

As seen from above, the IR literature has emphasized the role domestic NGOs and feminist movements play in norm diffusion (Basu 2010; Fábián 2010; Johnson 2009; Montoya 2013). It has also discussed contestation over the meaning of the norm and unintended consequences of global norm diffusion (Krook and True 2012; True 2011). Yet, it has paid limited attention to the CEE political parties in norm translation, particularly at the electoral level and in the post-communist context.

In a parallel fashion, because the translation of gender equality norms[7] has also taken place at the European level, a large body of literature also examines the Europeanization of gender equality policies, though little attention is paid to the new member states in many of these studies, as Verloo (2018) points out. This literature proceeds across two dimensions, which reflect the translation of "hard" and "soft" norms into domestic policies. The first direction is similar to the analysis undertaken by the constructivist scholarship on global norm diffusion discussed above. It adopts a top-down approach to norm diffusion and seeks to understand the domestic barriers to the adoption of the "hard" European norms (Avdeyeva 2015; Cowles, Caporaso, Risse 2001; Sloat 2004). Other studies have adopted "a discursive-sociological approach" that focuses on the discursive construction and contestation of the meaning of gender equality in policy debates (Lombardo and Forest 2012; Montoya 2013; Verloo 2005). In other words, this strain of literature has focused on "soft norms" diffusion. Very rarely, nevertheless, these studies examine all three policy domains – gender equality, violence against women, and

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[7] Less attention has been paid to the role the European Union plays in promoting protection against gender-based violence. See Montoya (2013) for a notable exception. Joanna Kantola (2010) offers a historical and critical feminist examination of the EU gender policy development.

work-life reconciliation at the same time, with many examining just one policy domain. And only one, to my knowledge, directly focuses on CEE (Avdeyeva 2015).

In addition to the Europeanization literature, many notable monographs and edited volumes have appeared detailing women's experiences in post-communist societies (Johnson and Robinson 2007; Moghadam 1993; Raciopi and O'Sullivan See 2008) and challenges CEE women have in politics (Matland and Montgomery 2003; Rueschemeyer 1998; Rueschemeyer and Wolchik 2009), but very few dedicated their attention to the systematic study of the interplay between EU supranational norms and party politics in new democracies (for a notable exception, see Avdeyeva 2015, Lombardo and Forest 2012), and even then the focus has been on compliance rather than on the over compliance, which my cases represent.

4.3 Paucity of cross-national studies

As noted earlier, with a few notable exceptions (Avdeyeva 2015), research on the promotion of women's rights in the region has been largely qualitative, with case studies dominating this literature. Empirically, very few studies test the systematic relations between parties, movements and gender policy outcomes in the post-communist region. No reliable cross-national measure of the strength of the feminist movements in the region exists in the literature, either.

Most existing cross-national studies on the region examine other areas of social policy and welfare states transformations, without paying much attention to the policies that promote women's rights (for example, Bohle and Greskovits 2012; Cook 2007; Kaufman and Haggard 2004; Lipsmeyer 2000, 2002). One exception is feminist scholars who focus primarily on gender as a category of power relations and the effects of family

policies on the transformation of these relations. Given that most feminist scholars reject positivist methodology, their studies of family policy examine the role these policies play in constructing gender relations and the role these policies play in structuring opportunity choices for women and men (Haney 2002; Moghadam 1993; Racioppi and O'Sullivan See 2009).

Methodologically speaking, most of the existing studies are small-N case studies that focus on various country sets in the region. For example, Cook (2007) examines the cases of Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Poland, and Hungary. Szelewa & Polakowski (2008) focus on the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Poland, Lithuania, and Hungary. Haney (2002) explores the case of Hungary. Aidukaite (2014) studies family policy in the Baltic States. Besides, all feminist studies cited above are also edited volume, with each chapter focusing on a different country. As is well known, case studies generate hypotheses but do not lend themselves for systematic testing of competing explanations. Furthermore, descriptive studies (Butler and Kuraeva 2001; Szelewa & Polakowski 2008, to name a few) continue to outnumber explanatory studies in this area of comparative politics.

5. Contributions

A study as the one undertaken below thus contributes to two bodies of literature – comparative and IR gender and politics scholarship, namely, the literature on norm translation and the literature on party system institutionalization in new democracies. These contributions are both theoretical and empirical.

Theoretically, this study advances the feminist conception of public-private divide and its relevance for policy making. I clarify the concept of private sphere. I suggest that

there exist the degrees of private, namely semi-private (concerns care and reproduction) and intimate (concerns an intimate relation between a man and a woman). These spaces are amenable for government action to varying degrees owning to the history of government intervention and the notion of appropriateness for such intervention. I also gender democratic responsiveness theory by arguing that government mandate fulfillment depends on where the gender issue is located on the public-intimate continuum.

My empirical contribution to gender and politics scholarship is in the results of a systematic test of which parties own women's rights issues and whether the policies that promote women's rights get enacted, once these parties attain office. Another contribution lies in the development of an original cross-national measure of the strength of the feminist movements in the region and systematic tests of their impact on party agenda and policy outcomes.

My dissertation also contributes empirically to the growing literature on party system institutionalization in post-communist democracies. It is done through the collection of the original data on party statements across a wide range of gender issues, which has resulted in the creation of a database with more than 2,000 pieces of data. These original data can be later used in other comparative research projects and supplement the *Comparative Manifesto Project* data.[8] Empirical tests of which parties, left or right, champion women's issues in post-communist democracy as well tracing whether parties deliver on their electoral promises in this issue area constitutes another contribution to this scholarship.

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[8] *Comparative Manifesto Project* data do not have a separate coding category for women's rights. Gender issues are coded across a number of different categories.

6. Research design

6.1 Sample

In order to answer my research questions, I employ the following research design. In an ideal world, I would like to have included all post-communist democratic countries (with *Polity IV* score of 6 or higher) in the sample, but due to the language limitations, only eight post-communist democracies have been included in this study: Lithuania, Latvia, Romania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, North Macedonia, Croatia, and Poland. The countries enter the dataset once they are pronounced to be democratic by *Polity IV* experts. This is done to maintain the validity of the argument because one can only expect mandate and partisan theory of democracy to work in democratic polities. Therefore, Croatia enters the dataset in 2003. Observations on all other countries begin in 1990 and end in 2015. Despite the fact that I have to exclude some countries, I am still able to keep two Balkan nations, which usually receive limited attention in the literature.

All the countries in the sample have lived under communism for about 45 years. All of them are at the comparable levels of economic development, with Bulgaria being the poorest and the Czech Republic and Poland being among the most prosperous ones. With the exception of the Czech Republic, all have a strong influence of either Orthodox Church (Bulgaria, Romania, North Macedonia), Catholic Church (Poland, Lithuania, Croatia) or both (Latvia) on society and politics. What is more, these countries share a relatively traditionalist outlook on the presence of women in the public sphere, according to the World Value Survey analysis (Inglehart and Norris 2003). All these countries are either EU members or candidate states.

6.2. Unit of analysis and data

The unit of observation and analysis shifts throughout my study. At first, I collect the data and analyze party election manifesto texts, known as the *Manifesto Corpus*. Using qualitative content analysis, I collect, translate, and record all party statements on gender issues in a given manifesto. I then code these statements to place them in one of the thematic categories of symbolic gender issues. In my coding, I adopt the *Manifesto Project* definition of a quasi-sentence. The *Manifesto Project* defines a quasi-sentence as "an argument or phrase, which is a verbal expression of one idea or meaning… Long sentences can contain more than one idea or meaning" (Klingemann et al., 2006, xxiii). Appendix 1 details the data collection protocol. Appendix 2 presents the coding protocol.

This data collection and coding exercise has produced a database with more than 2,000 entries of CEE parties' statements on women's rights between 1990 and 2014. Using *Excel PivotTables,* I then calculate a score on each gender issue for each party in the sample. This measure reflects the share of a manifesto dedicated to a specific gender issue. This score is a ratio of the fragment count over the total number of fragments in each thematic category as well as an aggregated score across all thematic categories.

In these calculations, I follow the *Manifesto Project* methodology to be able to merge the data at the party level with the *Manifesto Project* Dataset (2017). The resulting dataset is a hierarchical dataset with 353 observations at the party level nested in seven CEE democracies. Then, using *Seki and Williams (2015)* dataset on government composition, I build a measure of a government's position on a given gender issue. It is a sum of the gender scores of governmental parties weighted by their parliamentary seat share.

I then shift my focus to the analysis of the policy measures that seek to promote women's rights in eight post-communist democracies over time. Using the *International Labor Organization* database, I collect the data on policy measures that promote affirmative action and father's leave. Using the data from the *United Nations Violence against Women Database*, I collect the data on the policy provisions (any legal action, strategy, framework, or action plan) regarding domestic violence in each country between 1990 and 2015. I then build another dataset at the government level.

My key dependent variables are adoption of policy measures that promote symbolic women's rights. Namely, these policy measures challenge traditional gender roles and acknowledge the unequal position of women as group. If a policy measure is adopted in a given year, it is coded as 1 and 0 otherwise. My key independent variables measure the saliency of a given gender issue for each government. It is an average of individual party scores weighted by the share of the parliamentary seats, following the methodology of Tavits and Letki (2009).

Given the absence of comparable cross-national data on women's movements in post-communist democracies, I also collect qualitative data on feminist NGOs in the region, their commitment to political advocacy and their ability to organize public protests and large media campaigns in each country, using *LexisNexis* database along with European and UN databases of civil organizations. In this, I follow Htun and Weldon (2012). I then code these data to arrive at the annual score of the strength of feminist NGOs that work on gender equality and that work on domestic violence. Among other variables that enter my analysis are the share of women in parliament, type of

government, strength of veto players, severity of a social problem, and EU membership, among others. Later chapters describe these variables in greater detail.

6.3. Methods

I use a mixed methods approach to answer my research questions. I use qualitative thematic analysis of party positions on gender issues as well as their framing of these issues. I also use statistical analyses to test whether systematic relationships exist between party ideology and gender issue ownership as well as between a government's position on a given gender issue and subsequent policy outcome. Statistical analysis also permits testing of competing explanations for women's rights promotion in the region.

7. Dissertation outline

The remainder of the dissertation proceeds as follows. Chapter 2 explores the saliency of gender issues in party platforms across eight post-communist democracies over twenty-five years. It also tests whether party ideology is a significant predictor of gender issue ownership among CEE political parties. The formal hypothesis 1 tested in this chapter states: *A party's position closer to the right on the left-right ideological continuum is negatively associated with a party's support for women's rights in general, and for each issue in particular.*

Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework that genders democratic responsiveness theory and re-states the hypotheses. Subsequent empirical chapters test this framework. Chapter 4 examines the inclusion of affirmative action clauses in the anti-discrimination labor market legislation adopted by the CEE governments. Whereas the adoption of such legislation is a EU requirement, any affirmative action provisions are hypothesized to be a reflection of a government's position on the issue of gender

equality, given that the locus of government action is in the public space. The formal hypothesis 2 tested in this chapter states: *Governments, in which parties campaigned on gender equality, are more likely to include affirmative action clauses in their anti-discrimination legislation.*

Father's leave is the focus of chapter 5. It explores the legislative variation among parental leave policies, namely mandatory father leaves. As is the case with anti-discrimination policies, the EU work-life directive requires member states to introduce an eighteen-week parental leave, but there is no requirement for a separate father's leave. Only in its recent iteration of 2010, separate father's leave has been recommended, but this recommendation is non-binding. Since the European state has a long history of family support and interest in regulating childbirth and care through welfare policies, I locate the father's leave policy within the semi-private policy space and expect governments to be responsive on this issue, despite the fact that it also seeks to challenge traditional gender roles. The formal hypotheses tested in this chapter are hypothesis 3a and 3b. Hypothesis 3a states: *Governments, in which parties campaigned on father's leave, are more likely to adopt father's leave policies.* And Hypothesis 3b posits: *Governments, in which parties campaigned on gender equality issues, are more likely to adopt father's leave policies*

Finally, anti-domestic violence policies are discussed in chapter 6. Here, the EU "hard" legislation remains silent. Most norms have been articulated at the level of international organizations. At first glance, any legislation that protects women against domestic violence may appear to be a reflection of government position on this issue. Nevertheless, domestic violence issue strikes at the core of intimate gender relations.

Given the increased protection of this intimate space in the CEE democracies and the fluidity of intimate relations, it is unlikely that CEE governments will voluntarily go there. Thus, formal hypothesis 4 states: *Policy responsiveness of governing parties on domestic violence is conditioned by the strength of the feminist movements*.

The conclusion follows as chapter 7. It summarizes the main empirical findings and links them to the broader scholarship. It discusses implications for democracy, study limitations, and details future research directions.

Chapter 2

Gender issues in party platforms: Which issues, which parties?

1. Introduction

Under communism, the CEE communist parties have championed gender equality. Many achievements in this area, however, have remained largely nominal, making women assume more roles in the public sphere without necessarily providing any relief from the challenges imposed on them by their traditional roles as mothers and homemakers (Wolchik 1992). Nevertheless, women under communism have been gainfully employed and participated in public life along with their male counterparts, though any meaningful political leadership has still been off women's reach at the time (Kostelecky 2002). Women have also had an opportunity to balance work and family life through extensive maternity leave provisions and childcare facilities provided by the state and the employers. They have had a right to abortion, with a notable exception of Ceauşescu's Romania and some time periods in the Soviet Union. At the same time, women have continued to bear the full brunt of household activities, and the "women-friendly" policies of the communist parties have done little to change the general patriarchal attitudes or produce any meaningful reversal in gender roles between men and women (Johnson and Robinson 2007; LaFont 2001; Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2017, 245), especially in the intimate space of human relations.

Democratic transition has changed this political and social reality for many women in post-communist democracies. Women have no longer been required to work outside home, thus combining the dual burdens of paid employees and caregivers; yet,

many have chosen to continue to do so (Fodor and van der Lippe 1998; Pascall and Kwak 2005).

A different situation has been observed in politics. With the denouncement of the mandatory quotas, women's participation in politics has plummeted (Wolchik 1993). At the same time, the support for working mothers has been reduced due to economic restructuring, especially in Poland and the Baltic States (Bohle and Greshkovits 2013), and many women's issues, such as childcare and domestic violence, have been re-privatized in the process of welfare state liberalization (Haney 2002). Though I must add that domestic violence has never left the intimate space, to begin with (Fábián 2010).

To describe and address these changing women's experiences, two broad narratives have emerged after the fall of Communism. On the one hand, a neotraditionalist narrative of re-masculinization and re-feminization has emphasized the return to traditional values, framing women's role in society primarily as homemakers and mothers. This narrative has emerged as a "backlash against the [communist] state emancipation of women…and revived arguments about women's "natural" roles as mothers" (Racioppi & O'Sullivan See 2009, 3). The alternative narrative has emanated from the feminist NGOs that continue to insist on the state's role in building autonomy for its citizens through the expansion of female emancipation (Orloff 2009) and from the ordinary female citizens who want to protect their rights, often by organizing in interest groups and political parties, which were not very successful electorally (Kostelecky 2002).

Despite a widespread belief in the literature about non-significance of the gender issues in the early years of transition (Kitschelt et al. 1999), these issues have found their

way into election manifestos of many parties as early as the 1990s, as my analysis of the party manifestos reveals. But which parties assume ownership of which gender narrative and why? This is the key puzzle chapter 3 seeks to address. It is logical to expect that religious (Christian-democratic, for the most part) and nationalist right-wing parties to pick up the neotraditionalist narrative and the left parties to become allies of the feminist movements in promoting the rights of women and gender equality, as it happened in Western Europe. Nevertheless, given the record of social conservatism of some CEE left parties, i.e., the *BSP* in Bulgaria, empirical tests are in order.

Previous studies on the region have demonstrated that very often left parties are found behind issues and policies that are usually promoted by the right parties in advanced democracies, such as social spending liberalization (Tavits and Letki 2009) and pension reforms (Lipsmeyer 2002). And family issues have been pronounced apolitical all together, meaning they have been claimed to withstand ideological influences (Lipsmeyer 2000). That is why, despite our knowledge that left parties have been allies of the feminist movements in the promotion of women's rights in advanced democracies (Jenson 1995; Stetson & Mazur 1995; Wängnerud 2009) and have been behind many social policy innovations there as well (Esping-Andersen 1990; Huber & Stephens 2001; Korpi 2001), whether they champion women's rights in post-Communist democracies remains an empirical question to investigate. It may be the case that left parties in some countries are more "left" than their counterparts across the border. This chapter, thus, tackles these puzzles in turn.

To engage into the systematic tests of the relationship between ideology and women's rights issue ownership, or whether left parties after Communism remain the

allies of women, I build a hierarchical dataset with 353 observations nested in 7 CEE democracies.[9] But before I present the results of these tests, the discussion of the saliency of women's rights issues across CEE countries and over time is in order.

2. Saliency of women's rights issues across CEE countries

Careful reading of the news reports supplies plenty of examples of gender issues saliency in recent years across the post-communist region. Reproductive rights, gender equality, and violence against women are the key issues that appear in the media discourse, but the issue bundles and the saliency of these issues vary across these countries.

2.1. Low saliency of women's rights issues in party platforms: The cases of Bulgaria, Romania, and Latvia

There are countries in the sample, such as Bulgaria, in which women's rights issues have been almost non-existent in the public discourse, until a recent refusal by a center-right *GERB* and its junior coalition partner, far-right *United Patriots*, to ratify the Council of Europe's Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (also known as the Istanbul Convention). *Bulgarian Socialist Party*, in opposition at the time of writing, has supported this decision, driving a wedge between themselves and *the Party of the European Socialists*. For the first time, however, these events triggered large scale protests in the Bulgarian society in support of the victims of intimate partner violence (Dimitrov 2018).

In Bulgarian party platforms, the issue of domestic violence is non-existent, with *GERB* mentioning it once in their 2013 election campaign. To their credit, they have

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[9] Polish parties are excluded from the analysis in this chapter because I could not collect the data on all of them, only the governing parties.

made an attempt to present the ratification to the parliament, but have faced the threats from their junior partner of destroying the ruling coalition and pressure from other societal groups, namely, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, not to proceed with ratification (Hervey 2018).

Little attention, overall, has been paid to other women's rights issues by the Bulgarian parties, with a mean share of statements on women's rights being less than half a percent (.37) and a standard deviation of .9. No party has ever included promises to institute father's leave into their platforms. Abortion issue is non-existent in Bulgarian politics, either, judging from the party platforms.

The saliency of gender equality issue varies from election to election. It receives some attention in 1990-1991 and then reappears in 2005, when the EU accession approaches. It dies out again in 2009 election cycle and reemerges in 2013-2014, when almost all the parties mention gender equality in their manifestos, but they dedicate less than half a percent of their electoral platforms to it.

Overall, in Bulgaria, rarely a party would dedicate more than 1% of their manifesto to promises to improve gender equality in the country. Neither much attention parties pay to the issue of traditional family values and traditional morality, which surprisingly occupy about the same average share in their manifestos – around 1%. Nevertheless, if gender equality disappears from the party system in some elections, attention to traditional family values and morality persists over the electoral cycles.

Similarly to Bulgaria, women's rights have been largely absent from the public discourse in Romania, sans recent anti-abortion protests in 2015. Nevertheless, the situation with women's rights might be different in Romania than it is in Bulgaria.

Romania has ratified the Istanbul Convention in 2016. Among only a few countries in the world, it allows women in close combat (Keating 2012). It has recently made the top ten countries with the highest share of female owned businesses (Marica 2018). Interviews with Romanian women[10] also show that they do not feel limited in their life and career choices. What do the manifestos show?

Romanian parties have been very vocal on gender equality issues in the 1990s. Parties of various ideological affiliations dedicated between 1% and 5% of their Manifestos specifically to symbolic gender equality at that time. Nevertheless, 2000 election changes this dynamics. With the exception of the *Social Democratic Pole of Romania* and *Democratic Party*, dedicating about 1% of their manifestos to this issue, gender equality disappears from the manifestos of Romanian parties in 2000s and never reemerges.[11] Parties, however, continue to dedicate between .5% and 5% to the issues of traditional morality and traditional family.

When it comes to the reproductive rights, no party has campaigned either against or for the abortion issue. Father's leave and domestic violence also appear as non-issues in Romanian politics, if judged by the content of the manifestos. The issue of domestic violence has been raised once by *the Social Democratic Pole of Romania* in 1996 election cycle.

Latvian politics has always been more conservative than politics in other East European nations, owning to a large share of the Russian population excluded from politics as well as due to Latvia's strong renunciation of the Soviet communist past

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[10] Interview 02/20/2018, Miami.

[11] Last election observed – 2012.

(Bugajski 2001). Few news reports have been dedicated to women's rights issues in general and gender equality in particular in the last two decades. Human trafficking and violence against women have received slightly more attention over the years than gender equality has.

The platforms of political parties largely reflect this disposition. In the 1990s, one can count political parties mentioning gender equality in their platforms on the fingers of one hand. In 1993 election, it has been *Christian Democratic Union*. The party has dedicated 1.92% of its manifesto to the issue of gender equality and 5.77% to the issue of traditional family and morality. In 1995 electoral cycle, *Latvian Socialist Party* and *Democratic Party* have dedicated 2.3% and 1.8% of their manifesto to gender equality, respectively.

The 1998 election cycle has seen a spike in parties mentioning gender equality, and then the issue almost disappears from the manifestos, with few parties bringing it up in 2006 (*Human Rights in a United Latvia* and *New Era*) and in 2014 (*Alliance for Latvia*). At the same time, parties of all ideological standings pay their respect to the issue of traditional family and morality time and time again, with many parties spending 7-8% of their manifestos on this issue. Nevertheless, the parties do not focus on abortion issue in their programs, either (no party has ever included it into their manifesto over the years). Not surprisingly, domestic violence and father's leave have not been discussed, either.

**2.2. Medium saliency of women's rights issues in party platforms:
The cases of Lithuania and Croatia**

Lithuania differs from Latvia in three respects: it views its communist past more favorably, it has not not deprived large ethnic groups of their citizenship status, and the role of the Catholic Church in politics is stronger than in Latvia, but less so, than in Poland. These features of Lithuanian politics help to understand the medium saliency of women's rights. Abortion issue has been present in the public discourse since 2008 and gender equality since 2004. Lithuania is also a country with the most prevalence of domestic violence in Europe, according to the Eurobarometer survey (2010) and the media outlets discuss this fact, as a survey of the articles in *LexisNexis* database reveals.

Political parties have been somewhat vocal on the issue of gender equality in every election cycle, with each party dedicating, on average, about .4% (+/- .6%) of their manifestos to this issue. The most vocal parties (a leftist *Coalition Labour Party* and *Youth and an ethnic Election Action of Lithuania Poles*) have dedicated about 2% to this issue in 2008 and 2012. At the same time, larger shares of the manifestos have also been dedicated to traditional family and morality. On average, 2.6% (+/-3.8%) of the manifestos are dedicated to this issue. Over the years, no party has included any favorable mentions on the protection of women's rights to an abortion whereas anti-abortion statements occupy, on average, .03% (+/-.1%) of the party manifestos. The issue of the protection against domestic violence has gained the same amount of attention, with father's leave being absent from the party agendas. *Homeland Union - Lithuanian Christian Democrats* mentions it once in 2008 election. It does not appear in party platforms before or after that election.

Croatia is also a case of moderate saliency of women's rights because the parties pay attention mostly to gender equality and intermittently to domestic violence. Father's leave is rarely discussed. Gender equality, on average, is discussed in 1.3% of the manifesto (with a 2.8 standard deviation). Issues of traditional family and morality, on the contrary, only occupy, on average, in .9% (+/-1.7%) party manifesto. The issue of gender equality is the most prominent in 2000 and 2003 elections, with an average of 1.3% and 1.7% of manifestos dedicated to it respectively. It somewhat loses its prominence by 2014, when only .2% of the average manifesto is dedicated to it. The issue of domestic violence comes and goes, appearing in 2000, 2007, and 2011 elections and disappearing in 2003 and 2015 elections. Father's leave is mentioned once in 2003 by the *Social Democratic Party of Croatia*, and then is no longer mentioned by any of the parties.

2.3. High saliency of women's rights issues in party platforms: The cases of the Czech Republic and North Macedonia

Contrary to the cases discussed above, the parties in the Czech Republic and North Macedonia have been very vocal on the issue of women's rights. On average, parties in the Czech Republic dedicate about 1% (+/- 1.5%) of their manifestos discussing gender equality whereas .1% (+/-.2%) and .1% (+/-.3%) is spent discussing protection against domestic violence. The issues of traditional morality and family, on average, occupy about 2% (+/-3%). What is more, the issue of gender equality appears as early as 1990 election, when parties, on average, have dedicated about 1.1% of their manifestos to it. The issue of domestic violence increases in prominence from an average of .02% in 1996 to .2% in 2013, being primarily advocated by the [Czech] *Social Democratic Party*, the [Czech] *Green Party* and the *Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia*, which

introduces it to the party system agenda in 1996. The issue of father's leave has been introduced by the *Green Party* in 2006. It appears in later elections as well. In 2010, non-left, *TOP09* and *Public Affairs* include it into their manifestos as well.

North Macedonia is the only country in the sample, in which parties, on average, spend more time talking about gender equality issues than about traditional morality and family issues - .9% vs. .5%, with a standard deviation of 1% in both cases. Similarly to the Czech Republic, this issue appears as early as 1990 election and occupies, on average, 1.1% of party manifestos, with attention paid to it in every election. The issue of domestic violence protection appears on party agenda in 1998, when both *Democratic Alternative* and *Liberal Democratic Party* include it into their manifestos. It stays in every election afterwards. At the same time, father's leave remains less pronounced, with only a few parties mentioning it - *Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization* in 2011 and *Coalition Civic Option for Macedonia* in 2014.

3. Partisan theory and issue ownership in post-communist democracies

Given the variation in women's rights saliency over time and across countries, are there any systematic differences between parties on the left and parties on the right in owning these issues? Is conventional wisdom that the left is socially conservative in post-communist democracies remains true when it comes to gender issues? Are there any other factors, besides ideology, that compel parties to align with women's rights issues? This section will tackle each question in turn, detailing the theoretical underpinnings of issue ownership in general and the issue of women's rights in particular.

3.1. Party ideology and issue ownership

A large body of literature discussed in the introduction has established empirically that CEE left may act as if they were ideologically right. This, however, does not necessarily imply that the issue of women's rights will follow this suit. Socially conservative position of the left parties reported in earlier studies might very well be the function of the recent transition and the necessity to move away from unpopular at the time communist past. As time goes on and the cleavages in CEE societies begin to resemble the classical cleavages found in the advanced democracies (Evans 2006; Kostelecky 2002),[12] party politics may begin to reflect it.

Yet, the issue of symbolic women's rights does not map neatly into traditional left-right scale, unless two dimensions are explicitly taken into consideration while creating this scale, namely, economic and social dimension.[13] That is why it is important to take both dimensions into account when placing the parties on the left/right continuum. The issue of women's rights, devoid of its redistributive component, fits better into the materialist-post-materialist cleavage. This cleavage presupposes that parties on the right of this scale advocate traditional morality, traditional way of life, and strong authority while parties on the left and in the center stand for human rights and freedoms, self-expression, and toleration of alternative life styles (Chapel Hill Expert Survey 2014).

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[12] What is more, many communist parties, with their institutional strength, did not disappear in many countries but rebranded themselves or reformed into social-democratic parties and continued to enjoy electoral success.

[13] Which is precisely how experts assign a left-right score in the Chapel Hill Expert Party Surveys (https://www.chesdata.eu/2002-chapel-hill-expert-survey) that are the foundation of my measurement of a party ideology.

Furthermore, Budge (2001) argues that parties are unable to randomly appropriate an issue; it has to fit neatly with other issues in their platform. According to the saliency theory of party competition, when parties create their electoral manifestos, they carefully prioritize the issues they want to campaign on. A new issue, such as gender equality, for instance, is expected to be subsumed by a party whose "credibility on this issue is strong enough to pick up votes" by including this issue into their agenda (Budge 2001, 79). Other parties in the system do not react by immediately opposing the issue but rather by remaining silent on it. This discussion leads me to believe that ideologically, two types of parties should own women's rights issues – the left and the non-religious centrist liberal parties. Why is this the case?

Historically, gender policies that help women reconcile work and family life in Europe have appeared as a by-product of women's larger participation in the labor market (Anderson 2015), thus falling within the classical category of redistributive politics. With the activation of symbolic cleavages in the 1960s in Western societies that Nancy Fraser (2013, 171-73) dubs "the politics of recognition", liberal notions of self-expression have translated into the values of bodily integrity and symbolic equality between men and women, which have been logically picked up by Western European Green and Social Democratic parties.

Critical ideology that informs the platforms of many left-oriented parties is critical by nature in challenging the existing, often reified social relations, including gender relations. In its essence, it draws attention to the interests of the oppressed, the marginalized, and the silenced (and many women still fall within these categories due to the nature of their upbringing and structural barriers) in a way that is often alien to the

ideology of the right parties. Engels in his "The Origin of the Family, Private, Property, and the State" already views women as the first oppressed class. Engels writes: "The first class antagonism which appears in history coincides with the development of antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male" (1978, 739). Though not each and every left party in the region will subscribe to the communist ideology, the critical feature that unites all the parties on the left is to reform the systems of oppression and create more just and equal social relations.

In addition, classical liberalism and its belief in fundamental human rights and freedoms for human expression and respect for the pluralism of thought and lifestyle also aligns well with the symbolic dimension of the politics of recognition in general and women's rights issues in particular, void of any redistributive components. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that as the parties move to the right on the left-right ideological scale, which explicitly includes materialist and post-materialist cleavage in its coding,[14] the less attention will be paid to women's rights. Hypothesis 1 can now be formally stated.

Hypothesis 1: A party's position closer to the right on the left-right ideological continuum is negatively associated with a party's support for women's rights in general, and for each issue in particular.

The preliminary data analysis supports these theoretical claims. Statistical tests confirm that there are no significant differences between the mean shares of manifestos

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[14] The variable is constructed using Chapel Hill Expert Survey (https://www.chesdata.eu/) as well as the survey of other experts on the region to supplement the missing years. The variable measures party ideology taking into account economic and materialist-postmaterialist dimension. It is a 10-point scale, with 1 assigned to communist parties and 10 to fascist parties.

dedicated to gender equality between centrist liberal and left parties. Yet, statistically significant differences exist between liberal and rightist parties (ttest=1.5432, df=193, p=0.0622) as well as between left parties and right parties (ttest=2.2354, df=230, p=0.0132). On average, both left and liberal parties dedicate about .8% (+/-1.5%) of their manifestos to gender equality issues. Figure 1 depicts these differences graphically. With the exception of Bulgaria, left and liberal parties tend to place more emphasis on women's rights issues than their counterparts on the right, though these differences may appear somewhat negligible in Croatia in 2013, Lithuania in 2000, and Romania in late 1990s-2000s.

Figure 1. Mean share of the manifestos dedicated to women's rights by party ideology, 1990-2015
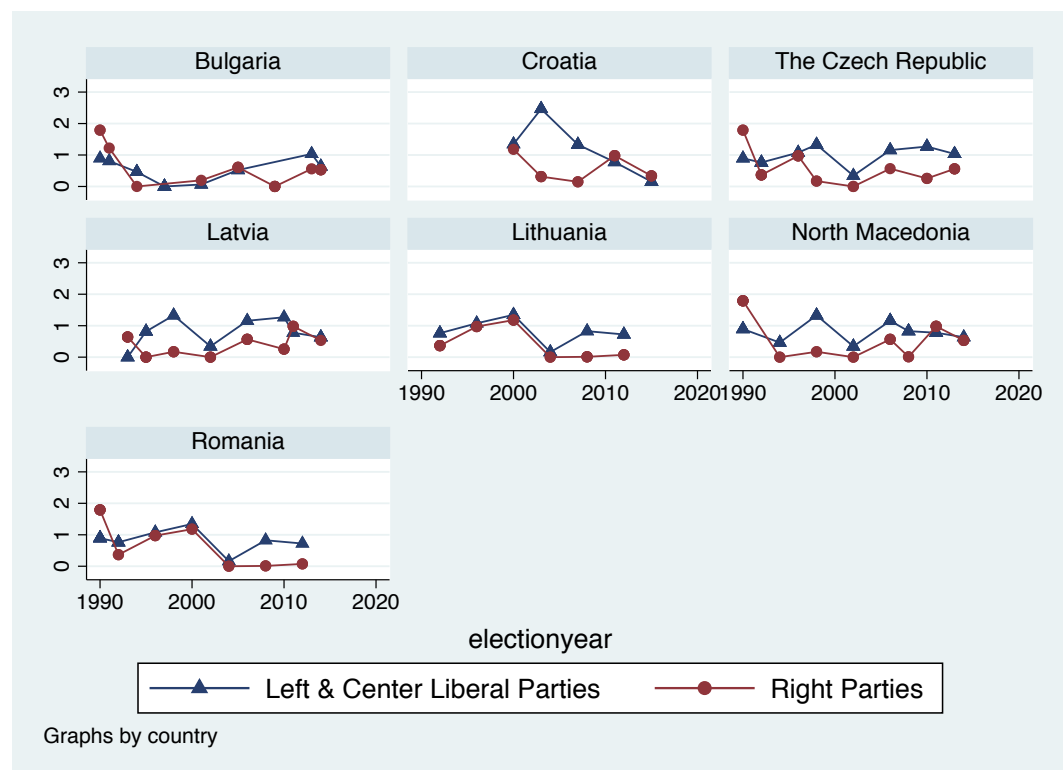
Source: Author's calculations.

3.2. Party system agenda

Besides ideology, parties have been found to respond to other parties in the system when choosing which issues to include in their manifestos. Parties pay attention to the issues raised both by their opponents as well as their potential coalition partners (Kaplan et al. 2006; Sides 2006). Green-Pedersen & Mortensen (2010, 2015) theorize this "common agenda component" and demonstrate empirically its presence in Danish politics between 1953 and 2007. Their key finding is that parties do adjust their issue attention to respond to other parties' adjustments to issue attention in the previous election.

Green-Pedersen and Mortensen (2015) contend that it is difficult and risky for a party to disregard the party system agenda for two reasons. First, even if a party ignores a given issue in its platform, it will still have to face it in the parliamentary debates. Second, a party that chooses to ignore an issue the other parties are talking about risks losing its capacity to frame a given issue in a favorable light. Given that CEE parties are interested in coalition building and re-election similarly to their Western European counterparts, I expect that the presence of women's rights issue in the preceding election is positively associated with the inclusion of women's rights in the subsequent election.

To capture party system agenda when it comes to women's rights, I follow Green-Pedersen and Mortensen's (2015) methodology. I create a variable that measures the average attention paid to women's rights by all other parties participating in a given election. To further illustrate, I will use their example: "if five parties – A, B, C, D and E – participate in an election, then the party system agenda facing Party A on issue i is calculated as the average attention to issue i of parties B, C, D and E, and this calculation has been repeated for each party in each election and for all the issues" (752).

3.3. European parties

Alternatively, the influence of the European parties can lead CEE parties to place women's rights issue on their agendas. Lewis and Mansfeldova (2006) report increased ideological orientation of the post-communist parties towards traditional European ideological party families. At the same time, transnational European parties and party groups have also sought new allies in post-communist Europe, especially at the time when it became clear that accession was going to take place for most of the CEE countries.

Qualitative studies report that the European parties have engaged in conscious effort to influence the platforms of the post-communist parties to align them closer with the platforms of the European parties, though with various degrees of success. The European parties, thus, want CEE parties "to be good social democrats and build strategic alliances to the East (Öhlén 2013, 202). CEE parties, particularly parties on the left, have also been interested in these alliances because they have struggled with legitimation and recognition in the new era of democratic politics and wanted to use the European parties to enhance their image and reputation with the voters (Öhlén 2013).

Among three largest European party families, the *Party of European Socialists* (PES) (social-democrats) and to a smaller extent the *European Greens* and *Communists* own the issue of women's rights.[15] In the early 1990s, PES is skeptical about the cooperation with the post-communist successor parties turned into social democrats. But after observing their electoral success, PES extends its support to both types of social-

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[15] PES manifestos 2004, 2009, 2014 available at https://www.pes.eu/en/about-us/documents/

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democratic parties in the region. This support includes tactical training and education on "soft issues", such as "party ideology, internal party democracy, and gender equality" (Öhlén 2013, 201).

It also employs a carefully designed process of gradual accession to its membership with attached conditionality. The CEE parties are first given an observer status, some as early as 1995. Then the CEE parties, if meeting PES conditionality, are given the status of associate members. To receive full membership, CEE parties have to demonstrate "modernization of the parties in terms of internal democracy, ethnic minority policies and gender equality" (Öhlén 2013, 223). PES particularly emphasizes the issue of gender equality among the three (ibid). Therefore, PES affiliation is hypothesized to have an independent and positive effect on the CEE party attention to women's rights. *Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in Europe*, a major transnational association of Liberal parties, on the contrary, does not prioritize women's rights issues, mentioning it only once in its 2004 manifesto, so I do not include an association with the *Alliance of Liberals and Democrats* in Europe as an independent predictor of a CEE party's position on women's rights.

3.4. EU membership

Gender equality has been a salient issue at the EU level, and it has been eventually made part of the conditionality package (Avdeyeva 2015). This can possibly play a role in whether parties in a given country pay attention to women's rights. Though there is no comprehensive gender equality policy at the EU level, and much of the legislation that promotes women's rights has been an outgrowth of the economic need to integrate women into the labor market (Anderson 2015), there exists a number of the EU

gender-related directives that the national governments of the candidate countries have to transpose. They include the EU 2006/54/EC Anti-Discrimination Directive, the Pregnancy Directive (2004/113/EC), the Parental Leave Directive (2010/18/EU), and the Part-Time Work Directive (97/81/EC).[16] Though no explicit directive exists in the realm of domestic violence, some issues of violence against women are covered by 2012/29/EU that establishes the minimum standards on the rights, support, and protection of victims of crime.[17] I light of these directives, I expect the EU candidacy and membership to have a positive association with the amount of attention parties pay to women's rights in their manifestos. The variable is ordinal. It takes the value of 0 for non-member status, 1 if a country reaches an applicant status, and 2 to signify full membership. It is borrowed from the *Manifesto Research Project* (2017).

In addition to the above, parties may also incorporate women's issues into their platforms in response to three other factors – voter's attitudes toward gender equality, the pressure from the feminist movements, and the existence of a problem of gender inequality and female unemployment. I now turn to the discussion of these factors.

3.5. Attitudes

Modernization theory contends that economic development is linked with human development (Inglehart and Welzel 2005). Human development progresses through several stages, and the pinnacle of this development is freedom of expression and emancipation, conceptualized as self-expression values in their study. Self-expression values include tolerance for "otherness", emphasis on subjective well-being, civic

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[16] https://www.equalitylaw.eu/legal-developments/16-law/76-key-eu-directives-in-gender-equality-and-non-discrimination

[17] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1421925131614&uri=CELEX:32012L0029

activism (challenging the government) and actual self-expression (Inglehart and Welzel 2005, 52). Their measure does not directly address women's emancipation, but they conceptually imply that women's emancipation is a part of the human development process. Inglehart and Norris (2003) further explicate this relationship. They argue and demonstrate empirically the association between higher levels of economic development and higher support for gender equality.

Specifically, in Eastern Europe, studies argue that shifts in the popular attitudes towards gender equality are believed to be necessary to happen before changes in family policy can occur (see Jugović (2016) for the case of Croatia; Motiejunaite and Kravchenko (2008) for Russia and Sweden; Szelewa (2014) for Poland). For these reasons, I expect egalitarian attitudes towards gender equality to have an independent and positive effect on the share of the manifestos' dedicated to women's rights.

Following the methodology of Inglehart and Norris (2003, 32),[18] I sum the responses across three items in the *World Value Survey* that measure attitudes towards gender equality at work, in education, and in politics and standardize to 100 point scale. The mean score enters the regression analysis. The variable varies from 0 to 100, with 0 representing the most sexist country and 100 the most egalitarian country when it comes to gender equality attitudes.

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[18] I slightly modify their scale. Inglehart and Norris's original measure includes five questions from the 1995-2001 Wave, and is modeled based on other psychological scales of this kind (the correlation between these items are at 0.3). I omit the two questions that ask whether a woman needs to have children in order to be fulfilled and whether an approval exists for single mothers. I do not include these questions for two reasons. First, they do not appear across all the waves in the World Value Survey. Second, the inclusion of these questions is not warranted on the conceptual grounds because they tap into a different value dimension. Instead of measuring how the presence of women is tolerated in a public domain of social life, it measures the tolerance of the alternative way of life.

Figure 2 details the mean distribution of this variable. In my sample, the population in Romania and North Macedonia appear more traditionalist in their attitudes than the population in other CEE countries. At the same time, people in Croatia appear to be more egalitarian on this scale. In comparison with other world regions, no CEE country approaches the high level of non-traditionalism that characterizes the Nordic and many other Western European countries. CEE countries also score below many Latin American countries (for a comparative chart see Inglehart and Norris 2003, 33). This is an interesting finding, given the existence of the machismo culture in many Latin American nations and the legacy of communism that promoted the presence of women in the public sphere.

Figure 2. Attitudes toward gender equality in CEE, 1990-2015
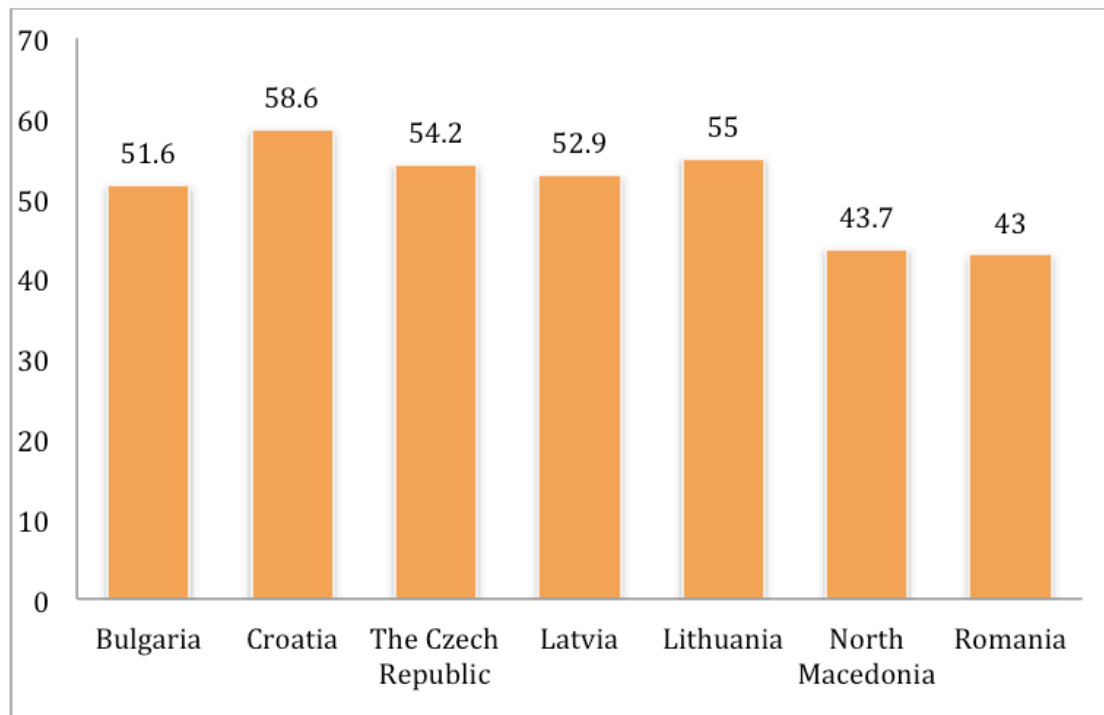
Source: Author's calculations.

3.6. Feminist movements

Feminist movements and feminist NGOs[19] that can be defined as institutionalized feminist movements are the key civil society actors that advocate for women's rights, both directly and indirectly. Both feminist movements and feminist NGOs consider fighting patriarchy, the existing social order that privileges men over women and assigns rigid gender roles to men and women, as part of their mission (McBride and Mazur 2008). They fight for women's rights directly through lobbying political actors, such as political parties and politicians, but also through awareness raising in small groups and in national media campaigns as well as via organizing protests to draw attention to women's rights violations (Htun and Weldon 2012).

For instance, the Czech feminists have engaged in a widely publicized debate about the meaning and role of feminism in the Czech Republic with the Czech-Canadian author Skvorecky, who criticizes this ideology "as unsuitable agendas imported from a foreign land" (*LexisNexis* 1993), thus inadvertently drawing attention to women's rights and the role feminist movements play in promoting them. In addition, feminist NGOs have organized a number of protests in CEE countries that encroach on women's rights, particularly a right to an abortion, in North Macedonia in 2013, in Lithuania in 2011 as well as in Romania in 2011 (Krizsan and Popa 2018).

Feminist movements in the CEE are not homegrown, though a variety of women's groups have appeared to address women's needs after the transition (Einhorn 2006). With the exception of Poland since 1980s (Fuszara 1997; Matynia 2010) and the former

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[19] In this study, I use feminist movements and feminist NGOs interchangeably due to the history of feminist movement development in the CEE, detailed in Chapter 6.

Yugoslavia (Hughes, Mladjenovic, and Mrsevic 1995), these movements do not begin as grass-roots organizations advocating for the feminist cause, as it happened in the US and Western Europe in the 1960. Rather, "many women's initiatives sprang out of reactions to immediate need. In both public and private domains, women's grass-root groups and NGOs stepped in to plug the gap left when the welfare and social services previously provided by the state were either privatized or ruthlessly culled by the incoming regimes" (Einhorn 2006, 92). Many feminist organizations advocating for social change, thus, have originally been a "reflection of the global forces shaping feminist NGOs in the region" (Fábián 2010, 7). With the passage of time, however, many local organizations have also integrated a desire to assist with a social need with a desire to advocate for a feminist cause of the transformation of traditional gender relations in the region (Ferree et al. 1999, 94-96).

In recent years, many CEE feminist NGOs have benefitted from the existence of transnational feminist networks and resources that these networks generated. Furthermore, democracy promotion in the region in the 1990s has also been linked with building civil society capacity, thus professional NGOs that work on women's rights promotion can also count on financial support from Western governments and civil society organizations.[20] Domestic violence protection has received particular attention, which has resulted in a number of CEE NGOs working specifically on this issue (Johnson and Brunell 2006).

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[20] In the 1990s, many "Western governments have suddenly … discovered NGOs as central organizations of civil society". This, in turn, affected the increased professionalization and NGO-ization of the feminist movement (Lang 1997, 112).

In order to construct a variable of the CEE feminist movements, I build on Htun and Weldon's (2012, Appendix A) conceptualization and methodology, which I modify slightly. Htun and Weldon (2012, Appendix A) define feminist movements as movements that seek "to improve women's status, and/or promote equality, and/or end patriarchy". The movements are autonomous if they "have organizational base outside political parties, unions, and other political institutions". Finally, a movement is strong if they have "a strong media presence" or are capable "of organizing massive protests" (ibid). Methodologically, I modify their approach to observe NGOs rather than grass-roots organizations, which are much harder to observe systematically.[21] I also have slightly different coding categories to reflect the CEE realities.

To measure the strength of the autonomous feminist NGOs in the region, I have created two variables. The first variable measures the strength of feminist organizations that work on gender equality promotion; the second variable measures the strength of feminist organizations that focus specifically on domestic violence. In order to construct these variables, I started my analysis by locating all the organizations in a given country in the United Nations database of civil society organizations[22] supplemented by the European databases, such as East-West Women Network,[23] the European Women's Lobby [24] as well as STOP WAVE Europe,[25] worldwide NGO directory [26] and

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[21] Avdeyeva (2015) uses a similar approach in her cross-national study.

[22] https://esango.un.org/civilsociety/login.do

[23] https://www.neww.org/

[24] https://womenlobby.org/

[25] https://www.stopvaw.org/global_vawg

EuroGender.[27] In addition, I have run key words in context searches on *LexisNexis* with the key words "feminism" and "protest" in English and in the original language to ensure I have not missed an influential organization that has not been listed in the databases above. I have also checked the published work of the country specialists. After the lists have been compiled, I have analyzed the materials presented on the website of each organization. I have looked for the founding date, mission, as well as historical activity reports. In addition, I have cross-referenced each organization's name in *LexisNexis* to establish whether an organization has organized and delivered a large-scale media campaign or protest. After I have collected these data, I have begun coding.

I have designed five possible activity categories, slightly different for domestic violence and gender equality variables. 0 is assigned if no organization exists in a given year in both cases. For the variable that measures the strength of movements dedicated to gender equality, 1 is assigned to cases where an organization exists and focuses both on gender equality and domestic violence but no information about its activities has been reported. It is also unclear whether this organization is autonomous or not. 2 is assigned if an organization is autonomous, and 3 is assigned if an organization engages in political advocacy and government lobbying. 4 encompasses all of the above and a proven record of protest or large media campaigns.

To measure the strength of the feminist organizations that work on domestic violence, I have devised the following coding categories. 0 is assigned if no organization exists that works on domestic violence, 1 if domestic violence is part of other issues an

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[26] https://www.wango.org/resources.aspx?section=ngodir

[27] https://eurogender.eige.europa.eu/community

organization works on but no advocacy is part of its mission. Most service providers fall within this coding category. 2 is assigned to a country if an organization that works on domestic violence exists in it, this organization is autonomous, and it engages in political advocacy but domestic violence is not their only cause. 3 is assigned if an autonomous organization exists, its sole focus is domestic violence, and it engages in political advocacy. Finally, 4 is assigned if protests or large-scale media campaigns have been reported.

Overall, there is a significant variation in the strength and thematic focus of the feminist NGOs in the region. For instance, there are no feminist NGOs that advocate for the protection against domestic violence in Bulgaria whereas most of feminist NGOs focus on this issue in Latvia, almost forgoing the efforts to advocate for gender equality. On the other hand, in Croatia, both issues are prominent in the advocacy of feminist NGOs. Feminist NGOs that focus on gender equality issues also get stronger over time in almost every country in the region.

Previous cross-national studies that link policy success in the area of symbolic women's rights promotion (rights that challenge traditional gender roles) with independent and strong feminist movements have reported positive association between the two (Avdeyeva 2015; Htun and Weldon 2018). Therefore, I also expect feminist movements to independently and positively affect the placement of each issue on the agenda of political parties in the region.

3.7. Objective social problem

Besides responding to the attitudes of their voters on gender equality, objective social problems that parties need to frame and address might also play a role in whether a

gender issue gets activated in the manifesto of a party. Though there is a debate on how much public policy is about solving an objective social problems (Schneider and Ingram 1993), some scholars show that parties, at least in the established democracies, pay attention to the existence of a problem and respond to it, as Wenzelburger (2014) demonstrates for the case of law and order improvements.

A number of indicators have been offered to measure the degree of gender inequality in a given country – the U.N. gender inequality index, EU gender equality index, and a number of measures on female labor market participation by the *World Bank*. For models that address the level of attention parties pay to women's rights and gender equality, I use the measure of female unemployment as a share of total unemployment, supplied by the World Bank. I expect a positive association between female unemployment and gender equality promotion in the labor market. In model 3, I include the ratio of female labor force participation relative to the male labor force participation. The higher the number - the more females participate in the labor market and the more willing the parties should be to offer father's leave.

Finally, the U.N. gender inequality index is used in the model that estimates the scope of human potential lost due to gender inequality that stems from poor access to healthcare, education, and inequality in the labor market. It, thus, adjusts the Human Development Index (HDI) for gender *inequalities* and varies from 0 to 1, with more egalitarian countries having values close to zero. I use the gender inequality index in the model that assesses domestic violence issue ownership because domestic violence stems from the pervasive culture of oppression and treating women as second class citizens, which often results in provision of suboptimal medical care and denial of educational and

work opportunities. It stems from an idea of male superiority and privilege reinforced institutionally and translates into the use of force and emotional humiliation at home, often without cognizant recognition either by the perpetrator or the victim, who is accustomed to being treated as non-important object both at home and in the public sphere. So in the absence of temporal data on the prevalence of domestic violence across Eastern Europe, which recent surveys just started to get at since 2008, the UN gender inequality index is the best available proxy. The next two sections outline the details of the analytical technique and present the analysis and the results of the systematic tests.

4. Analytic strategy

For the empirical test of hypothesis 1, I construct four models that explain the variation in a party's share of statements dedicated to women's rights in general and each issue outlined above in particular. For robust results, I include a set of control variables discussed above to isolate the impact of other possible determinants of why a party may choose to prioritize a gender issue in its manifesto. This section discusses methodological issues and choices.

Three major classes of models are available to estimate the effects of covariates in clustered data – fixed effects models that focus on modeling the variation within groups and hold unobserved cluster level heterogeneity constant. Random effects, or random intercepts, treat heterogeneity as part of the residual. They estimate the averaged population mean, using both between and within cluster variance. Multilevel models permit the estimation of both fixed (cluster means) and random effects (averages that use both within and between variation). Random effects and multilevel models are usually fitted via MLE estimation technique, fixed effects uses the de-meaning estimation

procedure. Each modeling technique comes with its own assumptions and trade-offs. The decision to use a particular model stems from the nature of one's data and the assumptions one is willing to make as well as the trade-offs one is willing to tolerate (Kostadinova and Kostadinova 2016).

Though a fixed effects model is a traditional model of choice in Comparative Politics when working with country-level clusters, it does not take into account between cluster variation. It is not a problem when within cluster variation is large, as is the case with women's rights issues and gender equality. On the contrary, variation in the saliency of domestic violence and father's leave stems primarily from between the clusters, thus necessitating the use of random effects model, which utilizes both within and between cluster variation. Robust standard errors are used to correct for within cluster heteroscedasticity and autocorrelation. The formal equation in models one and two takes the following form:[28]

$$y_{ij} = \alpha_j + \beta \mathbf{X}_{ij} + \varepsilon_{ij} \qquad (1)$$

Where y_{ij} is the share of women's rights/gender equality statements, and $\mathbf{X}$ is the time-variant 1xk (number of independent variables, such as party ideology, party system attention to women's rights issue at the previous election, gender attitudes, EU membership, membership in the European left, independent women movements, share of female unemployment) regressor vector. β is the k x 1 matrix of parameters, α_j is the unobserved time-invariant country level effect and ε_{ij} is the error term.

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[28] All models were estimated using STATA statistical software.

The formal equation in models 3 and 4 takes the following form:[29]

$$y_{ij} = \beta X_{ij} + \alpha_i + u_{it} \qquad (2)$$

Where y_{ij} is the share of the statements dedicated to father's leave and domestic violence respectively, X is the time-variant 1xk (number of independent variables, such as party ideology, party system attention to a given gender issue at the previous election, gender attitudes, EU membership, membership in the European left, feminist movements, share of female employment relative to male employment/level of gender inequality) regressor vector, β is the k x 1 matrix of parameters, and $\alpha_i + u_{it}$ is the error term that consists of the various components.

5. Discussion of findings

Table 1 reports estimation results.

Table 1. Determinants of party gender issue ownership in CEE post-communist democracies, 1990-2015

	Women's rights	Gender equality	Domestic violence protection	Father's leave
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	b (rSE)	b (rSE)	b (rSE)	b (rSE)
Party ideology	-.105** (.038)	-.104*** (.032)	-.000 (.01)	-.002 (.002)
Party agenda (lagged)	.132 (.101)	.177* (.079)	-.235 (.265)	.043 (.091)
Attitudes	-.05* (.026)	-.046* (.022)	-.004*** (.001)	.002 (.001)
Feminist movements	.155 (.19)	.121 (.172)	.021*** (.011)	.006* (.003)
EU membership	-.29* (.15)	-.259* (.117)	-.036*** (.011)	.007 (.011)
Membership in the EU left	.066 (.057)	.076 (.057)	.006 (.014)	-.009 (.007)
Female unemployment	-.023	-.023	_	_

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[29] All models were estimated using STATA statistical software.

	(.02)	(.016)		
UN gender inequality index	–	–	-.43*** (.066)	–
Ratio of female to male employment				-.001(.001)
Constant	3.96 (1.33)	3.66 (1.13)	.377 (.122)	.013 (.064)
N	248	248	235	250

Notes: Models 1 and 2 present the results of fixed effects models. Models 3 and 4 are random effects models. All the models are estimated with robust standard errors. *Significant at 10% level; **significant at 5% level; ***significant at 1% level.

To recall, I have hypothesized that party ideology matters for gender issue ownership. Namely, a movement to the right is expected to be associated with a decrease in the proportion of manifestos dedicated to women's rights. Hypothesis 1 finds partial support in the data. Ideology appears to be the driving factor behind gender equality issues, but has no effect on the issues of domestic violence or father's leave, regardless whether I use an overall expert assessment of a party ideology on the left-right scale or social dimension of it that places parties on the liberal-traditionalist continuum (analysis not reported here).

On average, a one-point movement to the right is associated with .1% decrease in attention paid to the issues of women's rights and gender equality by a political party. Additionally, a party's position on welfare state expansion is also positively associated with its position on gender equality (a 1% increase in attention paid to welfare state expansion is associated with .04% increase in attention paid to gender equality at 5% level of statistical significance).[30] Nevertheless, a party's position on the issue of

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[30] Analysis not reported here.

traditional morality and family is not a significant predictor of a party's position on gender equality.[31]

Domestic violence issue appears to be placed on the agenda by the feminist movements rather than political parties, in line with the expectations in the literature on issue innovation. A one-point increase in the strength of the feminist movements, for example, is associated, on average, with .02% increase in the mentions of domestic violence protection in party manifestos. A statistically significantly coefficient on the feminist movement variable in relation to father's leave will need further testing because the issue appears non-salient and extremely new to matter on its own.

Overall, it appears from the analyses that different issues have different mechanisms that drive them to the political party agenda, and these mechanisms are not simply the distinction between redistributive and symbolic issues, as Htun and Weldon (2018) maintain, because all the issues under examination seek to challenge traditional gender roles. It appears that left and more socially liberal parties own the issue of symbolic gender equality, which includes redefinition of gender roles in the family, but a party's ideological position is not a significant predictor of a party's position on domestic violence or father's leave.

These findings signal two things. First and foremost, partisan theory travels well to the post-communist context when it comes to the issues of gender equality. It appears that this issue aligns well with the traditional attention left parties pay to the expansion of the redistributive programs that seek to address other issues women face – a need for a

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[31] Analysis not reported here.

state sponsored childcare and maternity leave. A historical legacy may be at play here as well. Traditionally, nominal gender equality has been actively promoted in the communist societies, which makes it easier for the parties on the left to continue to own this issue. On the contrary, the issues of domestic violence and father's leave are very new, not only in the public discourse of the CEE countries but generally across the world. International community has started to pay attention to the issues of violence against women only in the 1980s, and the Beijing Platform for Action has not appeared until 1995.

What is more, the issue of rights does not clearly map on the left-right ideological spectrum used to assess the parties. Supplemental analysis, not reported here, that examines only the effects of the liberal-traditional continuum on issue ownership, finds that more socially liberal parties are associated with higher attention paid to the issues of gender equality but social liberalism is not a significant predictor of the issues of domestic violence or father's leave, either. Again, this could be associated with their lesser prominence in the public discourse of the CEE countries, overall. Or, alternatively, the parties, regardless of their ideology, choose not to emphasize the issue of domestic violence protection in their Manifestos, due to the believe that they will not score many electoral points with still relatively traditionalist electorates. Or, what is more plausible, the Manifesto has only limited space to convey a party's key priorities, and the issue of domestic violence is not high on this priorities' list due to its location in the intimate space of human relations.

Among other factors suggested by the literature to affect issue ownership, I will discuss three that have found support in the data. First and foremost, attitudes matter but

not the way the modernization theory predicts. The data offer evidence that, on average, a 10% increase in the direction of gender equality approval in the public sphere among the public, decreases the prominence of gender equality issues in party manifestos by .5% and has no effect (due to small coefficients) on the issues of domestic violence and father's leave. I interpret this finding as a sign that parties may be wrongly equating the rise of public support for gender equality with the belief that the situation with gender equality has improved. This interpretation will require further examination in subsequent studies.

EU membership has a similar effect. It appears that the closer a country gets to EU membership, the less attention is dedicated to women's rights issues, regardless of party ideology, signaling that the prospects of the EU membership may explain the appearance of these issues. It might also signal that for 15 years the CEE parties tried to please the EU and once their membership is no longer under threat the revert to traditionalism and assault on women's rights becomes possible. Because membership in the EU left is not a significant predictor of the women's rights placement on party agendas, I conclude that the EU effect works more through the issue of conditionality and formal sanctions and not through the membership in the European party families.

Also, significant coefficient on the party system variable supports the rational choice hypothesis behind party behavior and shows that once some parties are expropriating an issue, the parties in the system respond to it in the subsequent election. The effect is non-existent for the issue of domestic violence and father's leave, however. I suggest that it takes more than one party to actively own an issue before other parties are

compelled to pay attention to it. Otherwise, the issue is deemed insignificant and not worthy of attention and resources.

A few outliers emerge from the analysis. If one only looks at the overall expert ideological assessment of these two parties, rightist Czech *TOP09* (average expert score 7.7 on the 10-point scale of the overall ideological assessment of a party) and *Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization* (average score is 7.6), their commitment of gender equality issues in their platforms might appear surprising. Nevertheless, on the issues of liberalism and social morality the Czech *Tradition, Responsibility and Prosperity* (*TOP 09*), established in 2009 is less conservative, with an average score of 5.6.

TOP 09 has been organized by the former Czech Finance minister, Miroslav Kalousek, as a response to the *Czech Christian Democrats* (*KDU-CSL*) movement to the left (GlobalSecurity.org n.d.). The inclusion of gender equality issues in its platform can be explained through its challenger status. Though being a center-right and fiscally conservative party, emphasizing social issues popular with the voters (section two details the high saliency of women's rights in the Czech Republic) is often a winning strategy for challenger parties, who have less leverage campaigning simply on economic issues that are often dominated by the mainstream parties (parties that have been in government) (Kostadinova and Mikulska 2017).

International Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), in contrast, is a rightist nationalist mainstream party in North Macedonia that has governed in 1998 and 2006-2015. Initially, *IMRO* has taken a leftist position on many social issues (expert score on liberalism-traditionalism scale is 3.8 in 1990 through 2006), which explains its

inclusion of gender equality issues into its platform. I link it to the transitional nature of CEE politics when party ideological identities have still been shaping and, perhaps, the communist legacy. As Macedonian party system becomes more institutionalized, *IMRO* moves to the right on the liberalism-traditionalism scale in 2006; yet, gender equality issues do not disappear from its platform, averaging about 0.5%.

Below I offer a tentative explanation for this development that will require further testing in subsequent studies. In 2006, North Macedonia becomes an EU applicant, opening the country to the prospects of EU membership. Gender equality is one of the conditionality issues and remains high on the EU agenda. It is also a salient issue for North Macedonian voters, as section two outlines. *IMRO*, as a governing party, chooses the path of least resistance. Namely, claiming one's adherence to gender equality is less painful to a nationalist party than changing its core ideational nationalist component or cleaning up corruption to signal North Macedonia's adherence to the European human rights standards by keeping gender equality issues on its platform. Perhaps, for the same reason the party picks up the issues of domestic violence protection and father's leave in 2011 when the party is viewed by the experts as extremely traditionalist and authoritarian, with the score of 9.5 on the 10-point scale of liberalism-traditionalism.

Among the left parties in the region that have no gender equality mentions, *Czech Pensioners for a Life Security* stands out. This is the case due to it being a special issue party with a focus on delivering economic well-being to the retired persons. The party never crosses the 5% barrier and ceases to exist in 2002.

The trajectory of issue development of the *Social Democratic Pole of Romania* presents another interesting case. It offers partial evidence in support of the partisan

theory of party politics and party system institutionalization in this country. Overall, the party, which has been active in Romania between 1992 and 2000, has been moving between center-left and center-right position, from 3.45 to 6.27 in these years. What is interesting, however, is once the party moves to center left, the issues of domestic violence appear on its agenda. Where the party remains an outlier is its maintenance of gender equality issues on its agenda, even when the party moves to a more traditionalist position on the liberalism-traditionalism scale. I think the same mechanisms of the EU influence offered for the *IMRO* in North Macedonia may be at play here.

7. Conclusion

The chapter has examined issue ownership and the factors that drive it among CEE parties in seven post-communist democracies. Its key finding is that partisan theory travels well to the post-communist region when it comes to gender equality but loses its explanatory power when it comes to the issues of domestic violence and father's leave. Thus, a party's position on welfare state expansion, the degree of social liberalism in its ideology as well as overall ideology are significant predictor's of gender equality issue ownership. Though women's rights issues do not appear to occupy large shares of CEE party manifestos, the finding that CEE parties include gender equality issues into their platforms is surprising, given prior claims in the literature to the contrary.

Feminist movements remain a significant predictor for the placement of newer issues on the agenda, in line with the findings of previous scholarship, but they appear to play a lesser role when it comes to better-established issues of gender equality in the public realm, particularly if they appear to align well with the existing ideologies. How and whether these gender issues translate into policies and what drives this process is the

subject of the next few chapters. I now turn to the discussion of the theoretical

mechanisms behind policy change.

Chapter 3

Theorizing policy responsiveness on symbolic gender issues

1. Introduction

Chapter 2 has explored which women's rights political parties include into their manifestos and has analyzed the factors behind issue placement on the agendas of various parties. It reports that CEE parties are more likely to incorporate gender equality issues that address inequalities in the public space into their platforms. On the contrary, gender issues that openly challenge traditional roles of men as providers and women as caretakers as well as the issues of domestic violence appear in the CEE manifestos less frequently. The next chapters will explore empirically whether campaign promises on gender issues translate into government policies. This chapter details a theoretical framework that guides empirical analyses in chapters 4-6.

Though women's rights have been advocated by international organizations and post-communist governments are subject to these international pressures, I assume the primacy of domestic pressures on policy-making due to the existence of democratic elections.[32] Though democratic responsiveness theory offers a straightforward account of policy outputs being a reflection of electoral promises, it is gender blind. I argue, thus, that policy outputs become less straightforward when democratic responsiveness theory seeks to account for policy outcomes that concern gendered social relations, especially in the post-communist context. Feminist theories that seek to account for government action in these policy areas are also lacking because they do not account for the varying degrees of prior state intervention into the private sphere. Neither do they pay attention to the

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[32] At the same time, I also allow for a theoretical possibility of international influences on policy outcomes.

different nature of relations between a man and a woman as intimate partners and between parents and their children. Thus, in this chapter, I advance both democratic responsiveness theory and feminist theory of policy making by focusing on the locus and history of government action. I also introduce the concept of semi-private space that involves parenting, care, and childbirth, in which most European states have an explicit interest.

Taking the legacy and the context of policy making into account, I argue that policy responsiveness on symbolic gender issues (issues that challenge traditional gender roles) in the post-communist region[33] depends on the locus of government action. I further contend that different spaces of human relations are amiable for government action to a varying degree due to the history of prior government action in this space. In other words, I argue that given a long history of social policies aimed at reconciling the roles of mothers and workers under communism enhanced by the EU discourse on gender equality as reconciliation of work and family life, it is reasonable to expect the public and semi-private sites to be more amenable to government policy intervention seeking to challenge gender roles. Government action, however, becomes less likely when seeking to transform gender relations at the most intimate level due to the legacy of the socialist past, in which intimacy has been a site for retreat from the pervasive state and has become more guarded after the transition (Einhorn 2006, 98).[34]

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[33] Though at this stage of the project I limit my theorizing to the post-communist region, I plan to extend it to thinking about gender policies in the liberal European states that also have a history of regulating semi-private through welfare policies as well as test its explanatory power for policy implementation.

[34] I understand that I might be drawing an oversimplified picture of a very complex phenomenon. Nevertheless, any theory is only an approximation of social reality and it is judged by its explanatory power

In what follows, I present each existing theoretical approach to policy making in democracies and discuss its limitations in application to symbolic gender policies. I then discuss my proposed theoretical framework, which qualifies both democratic responsiveness theory and feminist issue-dependent approaches. I conclude with hypotheses that will be tested in subsequent chapters.

2. Theorizing international influences

When it comes to gender policies, three sets of factors are believed to drive the outcome – international actors, domestic political actors, and the types of policy issues. First and foremost, membership in international organizations and the need to comply with the international conventions may be behind the need to adopt a certain symbolic gender policy measure, regardless of electoral and ideological commitments of parties in government. Based on this theoretical approach, one would expect to see policy adoption by governments, in which no party has campaigned on women's rights. This, however, is not the case, given the variation in symbolic gender policies in the CEE countries, detailed in the introduction. Nevertheless, below I briefly sketch this theoretical approach to policy making, as it dominates IR literature on norm diffusion.

Keck and Sikkink (1998) have pioneered this approach.[35] They argue that domestic policy change is a result of an existence of transnational advocacy networks that are linked with domestic social movements and advocacy organizations. These networks "mobilize information strategically to help create new issues and categories and to

and its predictive capacity. Without this necessary reductionist account of complex social reality, empirical tests will be hard to conduct.

[35] For a critique, see True (2015) and other IR theorists working in the post-colonial tradition, i.e., Acharya, Mohatny.

persuade, pressure, and gain leverage over … governments. Activists in networks try not only to influence policy outcomes, but to transform the terms and nature of the debate. … They pressure target actors to adopt new policies and monitor the compliance with international standards" (1998, 2-3). According to their "boomerang pattern" (13), governments may be pressured by other states as well as international organizations to recognize certain rights that these governments, otherwise, refuse to recognize. This is achieved due to the domestic women's NGOs reaching out to the NGOs in other countries and sharing the information through them with the international organization.

The success of these efforts to influence a policy change depends on a number of factors, such as issue characteristics (discussed in detail in section 3 below) and actor characteristics. For instance, it is easier to influence policy change when advocating for policies against bodily harm to vulnerable individuals or issues on equality of opportunity as well as on issues that fit into existing normative discourse. Strength and density of transnational advocacy and government's sensitivity to international pressures usually aid in this endeavor (25-29).[36]

Besides transnational and domestic NGOs and IOs affecting policy change, the EU has become an important actor in the dissemination of policy ideas to the countries in the region. Though social policy (and gender policy is often viewed as an extension of social policy at the EU level) remains within the realm of national politics of the member

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[36] This is not also as straightforward as Keck and Sikkink (1988) contend. Any issue is subject to framing at the domestic level as well (Bacchi 1999). Also, Putnam (1988) argues that the international norms that are being advocated have to be within the "win-set" of possible outcomes accepted by the domestic constituencies that are necessary to back up the policy change (437). What is more, governments engage in a balancing act between the demands of the international obligations and their commitments to voters, but domestic electoral pressures tend to supersede the international pressures because of the less articulated and enforcible accountability mechanisms at the level of the international system (Putnam (1988).

states, the EU has incrementally increased its presence in this policy domain (Anderson 2015; Hantrais 2007; Hemerijck 2013).

Two policy instruments, hard and soft, are available in the EU to promote its norms and ideals. The hard law includes regulations, directives, and decisions. Recommendations and opinions are examples of the soft law. Most gender equality policy initiatives appear in the form of legally binding directives that require transposition by the member states. The use of soft law in the area of gender equality promotion has been on the rise as well (Kantola 2010; Lombardo and Forest 2012). Due to the nature of the European governance, the minimum standards approach along with the subsidiarity principle prevail in the making of directives, which explains a rather limited nature of gender equality legislation at the EU level (Kantola 2010). It remains tied to the labor market, shies away from any substantive mandates for gender quotas in politics or measures that promote substantive equality in the labor market, and relies on the soft law when it comes to protection of women from domestic violence. Neither does it mandate father's leave. The states are required to comply with the hard law or face sanctions. However, the states have a wide discretion to react to the soft law norms as they see fit. Therefore, the pressures of the EU alone are not able to fully explain why some governments go above and beyond the EU directives and transpose soft norms that challenge traditional gender roles.

Democratic responsiveness theory, in contrast, emphasizes the primacy of domestic factors behind policymaking and argues that policy measures are translations of electoral promises. International and EU norms may resonate more strongly with parties and governments who are sympathetic to a given issue, as evident in their electoral platform. Below I outline mandate theory of democracy in detail and offer its critique.

3. Theorizing policy responsiveness at the national level

3.1. Democratic responsiveness theory[37]

In a democratic polity, policies are expected to be a result of the will of voters, which is translated through the political system and emerges as "system outputs" (Easton, 1957). Voters primarily affect policy making indirectly by electing a political party whose electoral program they align with and want to see enacted when a party wins a political office (Erikson et al. 2002; Roberts 2010). Thus, an electoral program serves as a proposal for future actions a party will undertake once in office, and it must fit within parties' "ideological" identities to be believed by their voters (Robertson 1976; Budge et al. 2001).[38] This idea runs contrary to the instrumental view of parties being free to

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[37] Powell (2005) has been one of the first scholars who raised the question of democratic responsiveness and theorized it. Representation of citizens occurs in four stages, according to him. First, citizens express their preferences through their voting behavior, thus selecting their policy makers. For this to happen, parties have to structure citizens' choices. Then through institutional aggregation, representatives deliver public policies.
Following Powell, Budge et al. (2012) further contend:
"Popular control over public policy is a plausible description of contemporary democracies, operating as they do through a mandate-based conception of representation and policy-making. … accurate representation can be achieved without much effort on the part of voters and without requiring political parties to operate in omniscient and strategic ways. Three modest conditions can do much of the work: (1) divergent and dynamic party policy position-taking that brackets the position of the median voter (and, in a sense, of the modal voter); elections that produce changing partisan policy targets and or composition of governments; and (3) a pace of the policy change that proceeds slowly. … Testifying to their existence, the results of policy analyses show that national policies with respect to both the size of a central government's political economy and the size of its welfare state become aligned with the partisan choices of voters in the long run by responding to partisan choices in the short run" (191).

[38] As Klingemann, Hofferbert and Budge (1994) write: "Parties are historical beings. They stand for

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choose their policy positions (Downs 1957). A policy then is "a set of shifting, diverse, and contradictory responses to a spectrum of political interests (Edelman 1988, 16).

Thus, by electing a party into a legislature, voters equip this party with a mandate to translate campaign promises into policies. Despite diminished links between political parties and their electorates in established democracies (Dalton and Wattenberg 2002) and their weak institutionalization in post-communist democracies (Mainwaring and Torcal 2003), political parties continue to be indispensable in the policy making process (Webb et al. 2002; Nourin 2011), both in old and new democracies (Webb and White, 2007).

In most cases, parties that obtain significant legislative majorities get to form the government; thus, making parliamentary governments essentially party governments. Clear legislative majorities are rare in parliamentary democracies, and coalition building often takes place. This further necessitates compromises, trade-offs, and adjustments to policy positions, problem setting, and further consensus building (Rein and Schön 1977, 236). Nevertheless, even under this scenario, the electoral programs serve as important starting points to negotiate coalitional policy priorities (Strøm et al. 2010), both in advanced and new democracies. Writing on post-communist democracies, Blondel and co-authors (2007), for instance, show that "29% of the ministers report that their party was "very important" and 41% that is was "important" in setting policy-priorities for the Cabinet' (98). Thus, according to the democratic responsiveness theory, governments, in which parties have campaigned on a given issue, are more likely to act upon this issue, as

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something. Each party is expected to stand for something that separates it from the competition… Labor cannot rationally pretend to be Conservatives, nor Communists to be Liberals, nor Republicans to be Democrats" (24).

compared to the governments, in which no party has taken a position on a given issue. Democratic responsiveness theory, however, does not expect policy responsiveness to be issue-specific. Feminist studies discussed below explain why issue-dependent policy responsiveness is often the case when it comes to gender policies.

3.2. Issue-dependent policy responsiveness

Feminist scholars have long argued that policy responsiveness depends on the type of gender issue a policy seeks to address. Different actors (and rarely it is political parties and their mandates) drive different gender policies. As early as 1964, Lowi identifies three types of policies – regulatory, redistributive, and distributive. He argues that the constellation of actors and mechanisms behind their adoption varies (as quoted in Htun and Weldon 2018). Feminist scholars further build on these insights and argue that the most innovative policies that seek to transform patriarchal gender relations are expected to be driven by the feminist movements and international actors, which technically contradicts the policy responsiveness theory but accounts for a broader context of policy making in liberal democracies, which usually also give a voice to interest groups (broadly defined).

Blofield and Haas (2005) distinguish between role-based framing of women's rights issues and rights-based framing. Role based framing "seeks to better women's situation in a way that does not threaten a woman's role as wife and mother in a traditional conception of the family… A rights-based framing seeks to extend individual rights to women. Such framing explicitly recognizes women as independent adults" (37). They argue that the type of framing has an effect on the success or failure of a policy.

The most successful bills have employed role-based framing and have not entailed redistribution, thus showing that a type of a gender issue matters for policy outcomes.

Further, in their seminal study, Htun and Weldon (2018) argue that the type of gender policy activates different sets of societal actors, with parties playing a role only for a small subset of gender policies, namely, the ones related to traditional class policies. Evidently, Htun and Weldon (2018) distinguish between "status" policies and "class" policies. They further differentiate between doctrinal (rooted in culture and religion) and non-doctrinal policies within each of those categories.[39]

"Status" policies are policies that "attack those practices and values that constitute women as a lesser group, vulnerable for violence, marginalization, exclusion and other injustices that prevent them from participating as peers in political life" (Htun and Weldon 2018, 11); … they pose a challenge to institutionalized patterns of cultural value privileging masculinity and denigrating femininity" (ibid, 13). "Class" policies "touch upon the historic division of responsibility between state, market, and family for social provision and reproduction" (ibid, 13). These policies are ultimately classical redistributive policies that do not seek to fundamentally challenge the traditional roles of women as care givers, often helping them to combine the roles of workers and mothers. Htun and Weldon (2018) emphasize the role of feminist movements and international agreements to be the driving mechanism behind "status" policies, and left political parties

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[39] Though Htun and Weldon (2018) distinguish among doctrinal and non-doctrinal policies within each of these categories, I do not find this necessary because traditions that inform patriarchal values and attitudes about the inferior and subordinate position of women as a group (that status policies seek to address) stem ultimately from religious and cultural practices, so the distinction between these two sub-types is not clear-cut.

behind "class" policies. Parties have no systematic direct effect on status policies in their statistical models.[40]

Their contribution not withstanding, I see two limitations of this framework. First and foremost, it does not allow any space for formal political actors, such as political parties, to be the drivers behind status gender policies due to the transformative nature of these policies. But this claim stands in direct opposition to the mandate responsiveness theory, which expects parties to act in any policy area, as long as they have a mandate for action. Further, by focusing only on the left parties, Htun and Weldon have overlooked the emergence of a new cleavage, rooted in values, in most modern democracies and particularly in the European democracies, discussed at length in chapter 2. Political parties have been incorporating post-materialist issues, such as gender equality, into their agendas. Therefore, political parties and their position cannot be fully discounted as a driving mechanism behind policy change in symbolic gender policy domain. Thus, in the first step of my theorizing, I assume that parties and their promises matter for symbolic policy outcomes. Nevertheless, as I detail below, the locus of government action and prior history of it matters as well. Section 4 explains why this is the case.

Table 2 presents the possible theoretical outcomes of policy responsiveness and serves as a visual summary of the discussion of the preceding sections. It, however, does

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[40] Theoretically, Htun and Weldon (2018) assume only an indirect effect of parties on policy-making, though they do not openly discuss this assumption. They argue that movements affect policy making though raising awareness, staging protests and by working directly with the governments. Therefore, an empirical test requires an interaction model, not an additive one to adequately model such effect of the movements and parties. They do not offer such a model but draw substantive conclusions about non-importance of formal political actors in advancing status policies.

not include the locus of government action as another important predictor of symbolic policy responsiveness.

Table 2. Theoretical determinants of policy outcomes

Party Mandate	Policy Outcome	
	Policy Adopted	No policy adopted
Party in government includes the issue into its Manifesto	Mandate responsiveness (1)	Mandate non-responsiveness due to the institutional factors (2)
Issue not included in the campaign	Mandate non-responsiveness due to the issue seeking to transform gender relations Likely, the influence of IOs (if culturally in alignment with domestic values) and NGOs (3)	

4. Policy responsiveness based on the locus of government action: Theoretical argument

4.1. Liberal feminist theorizing on the public/private divide and the family

Though many varieties of feminist scholarship exist, what concerns me here is liberal feminism that has been developed as a critique to classical liberalism.[41] Individual freedom to live one's life as they see fit is the first corner stone of liberalism. Participation in rule making that sets up the constraints on this choice is the second corner stone of this political philosophy (Stanford Encyclopedia 2013).

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[41] My focus on classical liberalism is dictated by the history of the CEE region, which has attempted to transition to liberal democracy and to adopt the principles of liberalism.

Western liberal feminists have long pointed out the gender-blindness of this philosophy (Okin 1989; Pateman 1988).[42] As Susan Okin writes, "major contemporary Anglo-American theories of justice are to a great extent about men with wives at home" (1989, 110). At the same time, liberal feminist theorists have also left some unresolved tensions and have made assumptions about family that do not leave room for change and creative agency. These theories also overlook many forms intimate relations can take.

Susan Okin in her book *Justice, Gender, Family* (1989) critiques the public/private divide created by liberalism and offers a conception of the family as an inherently oppressive institution. For Okin, as for other liberal feminists, personal is political as family is rooted in a power hierarchy. This power hierarchy stems from the division of labor between the sexes, which is assumed to be natural in liberalism. Feminist scholars argue otherwise (Okin 1989, 125).

Okin, along with other feminist authors, contends that it is wrong to consider family and personal life as "sharply distinct from the rest of social and political life, that the state should restrain itself from the intrusion into the domestic sphere" (127). This is so because power hierarchies that emerge in the private sphere of the family translate into and are supported by other structural inequalities that women experience in the public sphere (132, 138). It affects the choices women make, the opportunities they pursue and succeed in. It also fundamentally affects whether or not a woman's voice is silenced. "*A cycle of power relations and decisions pervades both family and workplace, and the*

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[42] As Nancy Fraser (2013) writings argue, not only liberalism is guilty of gender-blindness. So is critical theory.

inequalities of each reinforce those that already exist in the other" (italics in the original, 147).

How do these power hierarchies emerge in the family? For Pateman (1988), they are linked to traditional division of gender roles based on a woman's capacity for reproduction. Okin (1989, 142) also adds to this the notion of "vulnerability by marriage" that women experience. It stems from the "weight of tradition on those who enter it." She argues that even anticipation of marriage already begins to shape women's choices in an asymmetrical way when American girls grow up thinking that they can "have a career or children, but not both" whereas boys do not face a similar dilemma (ibid, 143). This vulnerability is later multiplied through the unequal distribution of time dedicated to care and housework in the family. Economic dependence also poses threats to physical security and negatively affects a woman in the case of a divorce, thus reducing her bargaining power to exit these unequal relations (ibid, 152, 168). Thus, a "marriage is a clear case of asymmetric vulnerability, in which not only power to make decisions but also power to prevent issues from becoming objects of decisions is related to the spouses' relative opportunities to exit satisfactory from the relationship" (ibid, 168).

While it is important to point out the structural forces that shape women's choices, it is reductionist and historically contextual to present a family only as a patriarchal institution based on domination and oppression because human intimate relations exist as a continuum. Further, combining the intimate relations between a man and a woman and the relations between parents and children under one family category obscures the varying nature of these relations and varying interest of the state in each site.

Intimate relations are relatively fluid and are not necessarily based on reproduction, as I discuss below. Further, the bargaining power of women, or their ability to renegotiate the existing rules, as well as the degree of agency women have in intimate relations, varies across cultural and historical contexts (Duncan 2000). For example, it was women who have remained strong at the time of transition when many men have fallen victims of alcoholism and drug addiction in the CEE. Much empirical research beyond the scope of this dissertation remains to be done to study the origins of power differentials in post-communist intimate relations and the degree of woman's agency in them. Studies on the Western families have reported that the bargaining power of educated and professional women, which most CEE women are and have been, has increased dramatically in Western societies leading to more equal intimate relations (Esping-Andersen 2009).

Neither have liberal feminist scholars successfully addressed the tension between the need for state intervention into the private site of human relations to remedy the injustices done to women and the inherent value of the private space sheltered from government regulation. As Susan Okin (1989, 127) writes: "Challenging the dichotomy [between the public and the private] does not necessarily mean denying the usefulness of a concept of privacy or the value of privacy itself in human life." However, Okin never addresses the boundaries of privacy that should be sheltered from government intervention in her work (Satz 2013).

In addition, as I argue below, one should not conflate family with the intimate relations between two individuals. This is so due to the role children play in changing intimate relations and the state's inherent interest in reproduction. These questions are

particularly important to wrestle with in the context of CEE that has strived to adopt liberal norms after the transition and has attempted to distance itself from the pervasiveness of government control of the intimate, experienced in the totalitarian past.

4.2. Argument: Intimate-semi-private-public and the locus of government action

I argue that CEE parties in government are most likely to act responsively when it comes to symbolic gender issues in the public sphere and least likely to regulate the intimate relations for two reasons – differentiated history of state intervention into these sites of human relations and the fluid nature of the intimate relations between a man and a woman. In what follows, I first discuss the utility of the introduction of the concept of semi-private into the traditional public/private divide, which affords the possibility to capture a government's role in shaping each space. I contend that due to the inherent interest of the state in reproduction and an extensive history of regulating it both in the European and communist states reproduction has left the private space of human relations. I then explain how the fluid nature of intimacy theoretically impacts government responsiveness in this area.

Figure 3 below represents the sites of human relations as concentric circles. The arrows signify the probability of government action in each of these areas. Roughly, these sites correspond to three social roles of women – women-workers, women-parents, and women-intimate partners. Given a long history of social policies aimed at reconciling the roles of mothers and workers under communism enhanced by the EU discourse on gender equality as reconciliation of work and family life, it is reasonable to expect the public and semi-private sites to be more amenable to government policy intervention seeking to

challenge traditional gender roles. Government action, however, becomes less likely when seeking to transform gender relations at the most intimate level due to the legacy of the socialist past, in which intimacy has been a site for retreat from the pervasive state and has become more guarded after the transition (Einhorn 2006, 98).[43]

Figure 3. Policy outcomes based on the locus of government action
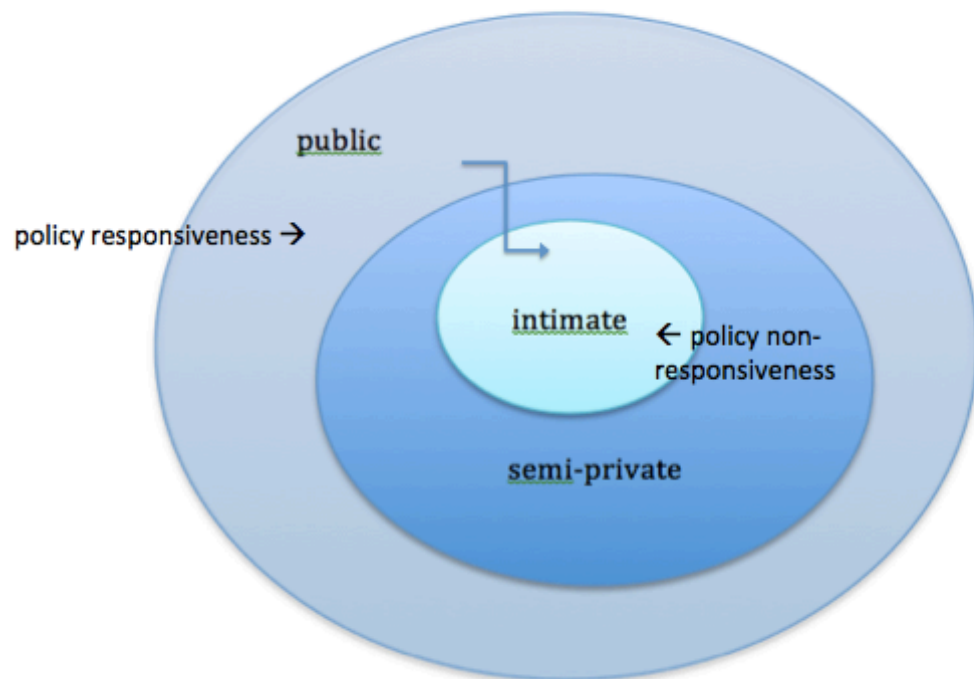
The outer greyish circle on this figure represents the public space of human relations. It includes sites of human interaction outside the family, i.e., labor market. In this space, a state's authority to engage in policy-making in order to advance women's interests in the labor market is the least problematic due to a long history of labor regulation, both in European and communist states.

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[43] I understand that I am drawing an oversimplified picture of a very complex phenomenon. Nevertheless, any theory is only an approximation of social reality and it is judged by its explanatory power and its predictive capacity. Without this necessary reductionist account of complex social reality, empirical tests will be hard to conduct.

As one moves inward, to the blue circle, one encounters a semi-private space of human relations. Semi-private site includes family understood here as a site of reproduction, in which most states have interest (Fraser 2013, 36). Namely, it is a space tied to childbirth and child rearing as well as caregiving for the elderly. The state has an interest and capacity to shape the choices of a couple regarding reproduction and care provision, and has often done so. The European liberal state is different from the American liberal state in that it has a longer history of outsourcing care outside of the family and incorporating women into the labor market. To this end, it has provided state-sponsored childcare facilities and training for women. This has been coupled with birth control access and access to abortions. In other words, women have received an opportunity to combine their roles as mothers and workers or to choose to remain childless. This state's interest in reproduction and subsequent creation of institutions and policies to support women in fulfilling these roles has created a precedent in government action in the ostensibly private sphere. In other words, care and reproduction have never been fully within the realm of the private site in the European state in the last few decades.

That is why I introduce the concept of semi-private space (see figure 3) to capture this history of state interest in reproduction and an active role governments have played in regulating it, implicitly or explicitly. The need to introduce this concept stems from the misleading dichotomy of the public-private divide discussed earlier. The concept captures the idea that reproduction and care in most European states as well as communist states have never been fully private affairs, free from government intervention.

Communist states have been equally active in regulating the reproductive and care space of human relations. Communist states have afforded abortions on demand, provided full employment for women as well as the full benefits of having access to free housing, which automatically made many women autonomous and empowered. They have also supported women in providing full-time childcare.

Thus, this communist history of regulating reproduction and care, which according to my theoretical model lies within the semi-private space, aligns well with the history of the European welfare state. In other words, in this site of human relations, the communist legacy has been reinforced by the history of the government action in this site in Europe Therefore, a likelihood of government action in this space remains higher than in the intimate space due to the prior history and interest of the state in reproduction. It all changes once one steps into the intimate space of human relations, depicted in figure 3 as a light blue circle.

An intimate site involves the sexual and partnership relations between a man and a woman. I contend that they are not always based on domination and subordination in the CEE, where many women have been empowered by education and access to housing; and reproduction is not always the goal of such relations. I also argue that there is a continuum of such relations but it is not my goal to offer a typology of them in this work.

Fluidity, creativity, and a possibility of an ongoing negotiation of gender roles are the distinct features of all intimate relations, in line with the models of sociology of everyday life. A habitual mode of conflict resolution will determine whether a relationship will dwindle into the one of control and subordination, but I will not go into

much detail to explain it further, as a number of other projects of mine are exploring this theme.

An intimate space of human relations, I argue, is the fundamental block of other social relations.[44] Though any individual is capable of having a relationship with oneself, it takes two people to engage in social interaction. I define intimate relations as relations between two individuals rooted in deep emotional and sexual connection. They may be hetero or homosexual. Though most feminist scholars would argue that gender roles are relatively clear and well defined, I conceive of them in a more fluid fashion due to the nature of human interaction in the intimate sphere of every day life that permits such negotiations and role redefinitions.

Put differently, intimate relations are sites where people can safely express themselves, where they do not need to play any social roles, a space equal to the "backstage" in the every day life drama of Erving Goffman (1959). Intimate sites involve a certain level of trust and vulnerability as well as an expectation that whatever happens between two consenting adults remains between two consenting adults. What is more, it allows each couple to define and redefine the norms of what is acceptable and what is not, which may be different from the mainstream cultural norms. The degree of toleration of what is acceptable and not acceptable appears to vary among couples and cultural contexts.

Furthermore, it is precisely the freedom to create one's rules of interaction and the creativity and spontaneity that come along with it is what defines the nature of the

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[44] I have no intent to go into detailed explanations and empirical support of this claim in this dissertation. In my thinking, however, I am building on the theorizing of a German sociologist George Simmel (1902) who theorized the basics of social relations and distinguished between dyads and triads, and an Italian feminist scholar, Lucy Irigaray (2001), who argues that democracy begins between the two.

intimacy. This leads to the difficulties of creating rules that will fit all intimate partners to the same extent a state can create and enforce rules between two contractual parties. This inherent fluidity of what is appropriate and what is not, the spontaneity, the ability to define and redefine the rules of interaction in intimate relations creates barriers to government action along with a notion of inappropriateness of such intervention, as the only government that seeks to control this space is a totalitarian government.

Escape into the intimate has become a hallmark of resistance against communism in the Soviet Union and CEE (Einhorn 2006). After the transition, the intimate space has been guarded even more. Coupled with the ability of intimate partners to define and redefine their relations, it creates a challenge for any government to create rules that will fit all. It is even more challenging to enforce such rules. Therefore, I expect governments to be the least responsive when it comes to the regulation of the intimate. Table 3 summarizes this argument.

Table 3. Gendering policy outcomes

Party Mandate	Policy Outcome	
	Policy Adopted	No policy adopted
Party in government includes the issue into its Manifesto	Mandate responsiveness (1) *if the locus of government action is public or semi-private spaces*	Mandate non-responsiveness due to the institutional factors (2)
Issue not included in the campaign	Mandate non-responsiveness due to the issue seeking to transform gender relations in *the intimate space* Likely, the influence of IOs (if culturally in alignment with domestic values) and NGOs (3)	

5. How does all this fit together: Hypotheses

The investigation of the positive discrimination policies is undertaken as the most typical test case of the gendered democratic responsiveness theory, for which it has the strongest explanatory power since the issue is located in the public sphere. While the EU requires all the countries in the region to adhere to the minimal standards of gender non-discrimination in the labor market, positive discrimination policies remain at the full discretion of domestic governments. Furthermore, no international conventions exist that compel countries around the world to engage in affirmative action economic policies to promote women's economic rights. The CEDAW, as well as the EU directives, only require non-discrimination and equal treatment. Further, the locus of government action in this case is a traditional public site. Therefore, I expect to see government responsiveness in this case. Chapter 4 tests this hypothesis empirically.

Chapter 5 explores the adoption of father's leave policies in CEE countries. This policy domain is only marginally influenced by the international norms, primarily through the "soft" EU norms. Hence, on first appearance, it also represents the most likely test case for the democratic responsiveness theory. At the same time, an introduction of father's leave challenges traditional gender roles, which makes government action less likely in this area, according to Htun and Weldon's (2018) and Blofield and Haas's (2005) framework. However, as I argue above, this issue belongs to the semi-private sphere, rather than the intimate sphere, which increases the likelihood of policy responsiveness.

Finally, chapter 6 explores government action on domestic violence. This is a much narrower policy domain than the area of violence against women that is

traditionally investigated by feminist scholars. I hypothesize that the government action in this domain is the hardest to undertake due to its locus in the intimate sphere of human relations. The reason the mandate is so difficult to obtain and then to fulfill in this policy area is due both to the guardianship of the intimacy and the fluidity of roles at the most intimate level of human relations. Placed in the context of post-communist democracies with extensive history of government intervention into private life, this site becomes even more guarded. This situation is further exacerbated by the absence of any EU directive on domestic violence prevention and protection and the late appearance of the issue on the EU agenda (around 2000s), in comparison to the issues of gender equality (late 1950s) and work-life reconciliation (late 1980s – early 1990s). I now turn to the empirical tests of these hypotheses.

Chapter 4

Government responsiveness in the public sphere:
Affirmative action in the labor market

1. Introduction

Why do some CEE countries have chosen to substantively advance gender equality via public policy provisions while others have not moved beyond the transposition of the anti-discrimination provisions of the EU gender equality legislation? This chapter argues that parties and their position on women's rights issues are the answer to this empirical puzzle. Since government action takes place in the realm of the public domain of human relations, parties will be responsive on this symbolic gender issue.

The case of affirmative action[45] policy measures in a new democracy represents an excellent empirical case to examine how domestic politics intervenes in the case of the Europeanization of public policy. It is also an excellent test case for government action in the public domain, which as chapter 3 argues, conditions the degree of government responsiveness on gender issues. The EU CEE member and candidate states allow for the most similar systems research design because they share many similarities, such as conditionality pressures, political systems, communist past that makes recognition of gender inequality in the labor market by formal political actors particularly challenging, and moderately traditionalist attitudes of their respective citizens on the issues of gender equality. Thus, an examination of the affirmative action policies in such similar environment allows us to disentangle the effects of supranational and local governance.

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[45] By affirmative action I understand policies that actively seek to promote the inclusion of women in the labor market, reverse occupational self-selection along gender lines in education and/or seek to increase female participation in the professions/roles where women have been traditionally underrepresented.

None of the EU gender equality directives mandates the adoption of the affirmative action provisions, only recommends them, as opposed to the mandatory adoption of the anti-discrimination policies. This is so due to the minimalist nature of the EU gender equality legislation (Kantola 2010).[46] The chapter also specifically focuses on the affirmative action in the labor market because other policy measures seeking to promote gender equality in the labor market, such as non-discrimination of pregnant workers and parental leave directives, have existed in the CEE countries under communism and have been carried over into the post-communist period (Avdeyeva 2015).

While many women were gainfully employed under communism and many had access to tertiary education, immediately after the transition, more women across the region found themselves unemployed and their unemployment lasted longer than for men (Moghadam 1993). At the same time, the support for working mothers was reduced due to economic restructuring, especially in Poland and the Baltic States (Bohle and Greshkovits 2013; Haney 2002). This resulted in widespread employment discrimination against young women and women with children (Rueschemeyer 2011, 113). Though fewer women were unemployed in comparison to men in Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, and Romania by the end of 2000s (Rueschemeyer 2011, 114), "women [were] increasingly crowded into less prestigious, underpaid public sector jobs… [and were] paid significantly less no matter the sector and occupation they worked in" (Fodor 2006, 9).

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[46] The EU gender equality directives include Equal Pay Directive 75/117/EEC, Directive 79/7/EEC on the prohibition of discrimination in social security schemes, Directive 2010/41/EU that prohibits discrimination of the self-employed individuals, Directive 92/85/EEC that bans discrimination of pregnant workers. Directive on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (2006/54/EC) ties these earlier directives together. Source: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content

Affirmative action policies are designed explicitly to address these structural inequalities in the labor market. This type of policy measures is ideationally novel to the region because it falls within the realm of the politics of recognition (Fraser 2013), or status politics (Htun and Weldon 2018). Government action is also located within the public domain of human relations. Culturally and historically, government action on gender issues in this space has been accepted. The adoption of affirmative action policies, thus, is expected to be a reflection of a governing party's electoral platform.

2. Gender equality policies: Past and present

2.1. Gender equality policies under communism

Gender equality in the labor market under communism was a function of structural and ideational factors. On the one hand, communist governments had to implement large-scale industrialization programs, which required massive human resources to be successful. On the other hand, as discussed in chapter 2, women's emancipation was one of the tenets of the communist ideology. This translated into an active inclusion of women into the labor market and attempts to free them from the demands of family life. In the early years of the Soviet regime, there were attempts to abolish the "bourgeois" family all together and to actively include women in the labor force. Large infrastructure was created to relieve women from the burdens of home labor, such as public canteens and later public laundromats. Women received access to public education and were expected to gainfully contribute to the communist economies by being gainfully employed outside the house. Simultaneously, a wide network of childcare facilities, summer camps, and factory nurseries were created to support women's employment.

CEE countries transitioned to communism after the WWII as the result of the Soviet victory and the separation of the spheres of influence in Europe between the Soviet Union and the West. It also happened due Stalin's reneging on his earlier agreement with the allies to permit free and fair elections in the region. In many CEE countries, industrialization took place during the communist period, and the role of women in economy was similar to the one women played in the Soviet Union. There was an active government support for the working mothers, so female employment was both guaranteed and required (Rueschemeyer 2011, 110-111). Under late communism in 1985, female labor market participation for women between 40-44 years of age was much higher in CEE countries than in advanced democracies. It stood at 92% in Czechoslovakia and at 85% in Poland in comparison to 55% in Western Europe (Kostelecky 2002). Variation existed among the countries in the region, however, in how many women were receiving college degrees. Thus, in 1980, the lowest number of women (43%) was enrolled in tertiary education in Romania and the Czech Republic and the highest (57% and 56%) in Latvia and Bulgaria (Rueschemeyer 2011, 110).

Nevertheless, these communist gender equality policies were substantively different from the gender equality policies adopted in western capitalist democracies. Whereas the goal of the communist policies was to achieve nominal gender equality and employ all the women, they left little choice for women to choose their life paths. The major goal was to create mother-workers by accommodating the biological differences between the sexes. Some women could have opted for being just workers by not getting married, but this choice was stigmatized because everyone was expected to be a contributing productive member to the communist economy. The option of stay at home

mothers was non-existent; full participation in the labor force was required (Rueschemeyer 2011, 110). Furthermore, it was very difficult to support one's family on one salary; yet, women continued to earn about 2/3 of what men earned (Kostelecky 2002, 118-119). Needless to say, that once transition to capitalism and democracy occurred, there was no longer the need to continue the policies of active inclusion of women into the labor market at the government level. And with the arrival of the market, fierce competition between men and women for more lucrative jobs occurred. Women very often have been the losers in this competition. (Motiejunaite 2008; Wolchik 2018, 259).

In contrast, gender equality policies in Western democracies, especially the ones promoted by the feminist groups have sought to establish women's autonomy and choice (Orloff 2009). These policies recognize a structural disadvantage that women experience as a group and sought to remedy it via non-discrimination policies. The focus of these policies has been to achieve equal pay for equal work, to break the glass ceiling, and encourage women to pursue traditionally male dominated occupations. Different models of gender equality policies have emerged in the West, allowing women varying degrees of autonomy. To the discussion of these policies I now turn.

2.2. Gender equality policies in Western democracies and the EU

The disadvantaged position of women in the labor market and discriminatory practices that often stemmed from women's need to combine the roles of earners and caregivers have been on the radar of the feminist movements and some political parties in advanced capitalist democracies since 1960s. The demand for equal pay for equal work has existed since the end of the WWI (Kantola 2010, 27). Back in the day, women often

found themselves in lower-paying "female" professions and were less likely to get promoted, even if they were as qualified as their male counterparts. Few accommodations existed to accommodate unique women's life trajectories as mothers and workers; and gender discrimination and sexual harassment were prevalent and widespread (Henderson and Jeydel 2014, 113-114). It became relatively clear that the market would not accommodate women's dual roles and structurally unequal position on its own.

The enactment of the gender equality policies in the labor market in advanced democracies was further complicated by the existence of the distinct cultural models of the "appropriate" roles assigned to men and women and welfare policy regimes that supported these roles. Pfau-Effinger (1998) distinguishes three primary gender cultural systems in Europe: the male breadwinner/female (part-time) home carer model (Germany), the dual breadwinner/ state carer model (Finland), and the dual earner/ marketized female carer model (the United Kingdom).

Nevertheless, as I argue in chapter three, despite these roles, government action to include women in the labor market is easier in this domain due to the tradition of legislating the public space. It does not require any fundamental restructuring of power hierarchies at the intimate level. With the passage of time, thus, all Western countries have made attempts to integrate women into the labor market. To support such integration, Western democracies have adopted equal pay for equal work laws first, followed by the laws that outlaw gender based discrimination (Mazur 2002, 80-87).

Developments at the EU level have often traced policy developments in some of the member states and, in return, have affected domestic legislation on gender equality in others. Member states that have felt they can potentially become disadvantaged if the

policy is not implemented at the EU level, have actively pushed for gender equality measures to be adopted at the EU level, with economic rather than women's rights concerns being the driving force behind these developments (Hoskyns 1996, 57).

This is how Article 119 (now Article 141 EC) of the Treaty of Rome begins in 1957. It specifies that women and men should receive equal pay for equal work (van der Vleuten 2007, 33). The French, who have a constitutional provision that required equal pay for equal work for men and women, are concerned that their employers are going to be put at a disadvantage and actively support Article 119, while the Dutch and the German governments oppose it (Hoskyns 1996, 45-50; Kantola 2010, 27-28).

Similarly, once Sweden and Finland accede to the EU in the 1995, they raise concerns that their gender equality standards will diminish, so they begin the advocacy to export the Swedish model of gender equality to the EU level, especially during the Swedish presidency of the Council of Ministers of the European Union (Kantola 2010). It has resulted in the acceptance and promotion of the gender mainstreaming at the EU level (Squires 2010, 46).

By the time CEE nations become candidate states in the late 1990s, many EU gender equality directives are in place that have largely been developed in the 1970s (Kantola 2010, 31). Though social policy (and gender policy is often viewed as an extension of social policy at the EU level) remains within the jurisdiction of the member states, the EU has incrementally increased its presence in the social policy domain (Anderson 2015; Hantrais 2007; Hemerijck 2013).

Two policy instruments, hard and soft, are available in the EU to promote its norms and ideals. The hard law includes regulations, directives, and decisions.

Recommendations and opinions are examples of the soft law. Most gender equality policy initiatives appear in the form of legally binding directives that require transposition by the member states, though the use of soft law in the area of gender equality promotion has been on the rise as well (Kantola 2010; Lombardo and Forest 2012). Due to the nature of the European governance, the minimum standards approach along with the subsidiarity principle prevail in the making of directives, which explains a rather limited nature of gender equality legislation at the EU level (Kantola 2010). It remains tied to the labor market, shies away from any substantive mandates for gender quotas in politics or positive measures to promote gender equality in the labor market.

2.3. What drives CEE government policy responsiveness in the labor market?

A number of gender equality directives have been adopted over the years, and all of them had to be transposed by the new members by the time or shortly after accession (Avdeyeva 2015). These directives include Directive 79/7/EEC on the prohibition of discrimination in social security schemes, Directive 2010/41/EU that prohibits discrimination of the self-employed individuals, Directive 92/85/EEC that bans discrimination of pregnant workers along with the Parental leave directive (2010/18/EU) and Directive on part-time work (97/81/EC). Directive on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation (2006/54/EC) ties and summarizes these earlier directives together.[47]

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[47] https://www.equalitylaw.eu/legal-developments/16-law/76-key-eu-directives-in-gender-equality-and-non-discrimination

Though earlier studies recorded some degree of non-compliance in some policy areas, including gender equality (Avdeyeva 2015), by 2015, all the countries in the sample, namely, Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, and North Macedonia have either a gender equality law in place or an anti-discrimination policy with the protection against gender discrimination in the labor market, according to the ILO database. What varies among these countries, however, is the inclusion of the affirmative action clauses in these policies. Appendices 3 and 4 detail this variation.

A closer reading of the EU 2006/54/EC directive confirms that affirmative action is not a required measure to be transposed. It is only "recommended" to the member and candidate states:

In accordance with Article 141(4) of the Treaty, with a view to ensuring full equality in practice between men and women in working life, the principle of equal treatment does not prevent Member States from maintaining or adopting measures providing for specific advantages in order to make it easier for the under-represented sex to pursue a vocational activity or to prevent or compensate for disadvantages in professional careers. Given the current situation and bearing in mind Declaration No 28 to the Amsterdam Treaty, Member States should, in the first instance, aim at improving the situation of women in working life (par 22).[48]

Despite the first impression that the EU would be the driving mechanisms behind gender equality legislation in the region, it appears that another mechanism is at play if one seeks to understand the variation in policy measures adopted in new post-communist democracies to promote gender equality. On the one hand, the states have to respond to the pressures that are generated from their membership in the EU; on the other, the parties in the government have to consider their electoral commitments to various issues

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[48] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32006L0054

to appear responsive in the eyes of their constituents, as the previous chapter explains in detail. In addition, government action to enact symbolic gender policies in the public domain appears legitimate, as chapter 3 also discusses. Thus, the decision to go beyond the minimum requirements set in the EU laws lies solely with the domestic political actors, namely political parties, the only formal political actor in parliamentary democracies who has real political power to deliver legislative change and adopt affirmative action policies. My systematic content analysis of party manifestos over twenty-five years shows that CEE political parties discuss gender equality issue as early as the 1990s and continue to address them in their later programs.[49]

Four common themes have appeared in the programs that relate to gender equality in the labor market. The parties commit themselves to addressing gender discrimination in the workplace, including discrimination against working mothers and young women, often through the introduction of employment preferences for women or incentives for employers to hire more women. The parties also suggest special training to increase women's competitiveness in the labor market, including training in entrepreneurial activity. The parties are also dedicated to fighting gender stereotypes in education and attracting more women into male-dominated fields in all countries in the sample but Bulgaria. Finally, some parties also mention greater engagement of males in the family.

Governments in parliamentary political systems came to be known as "party governments". Namely, government composition and the assignment of the prime minister position reflect party majorities in the legislatures. This often results in coalition

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[49] Romania is the only country in the sample where the parties stopped addressing the gender equality issue after the 2000 election.

building and adjustments to the electoral programs, which are, nevertheless, serve as important starting points to negotiate policy priorities. Blondel and co-authors (2007) report that, despite of a coalitional nature of CEE governments, "29% of the ministers report that their party was "very important" and 41% that is was "important'" in setting policy-priorities for the Cabinet [in CEE countries]" (98).

Thus, one can expect the parties that have campaigned to promote gender equality and that see the issue of women's rights as a salient issue (saliency is defined by the inclusion of this issue into a party's electoral platform) will go beyond the minimum required standards of non-discrimination provisions in their policies and pass the affirmative action provisions as well. I can now state my formal hypothesis 2:

Hypothesis 2: Governments, in which parties campaigned on gender equality, are more likely to include affirmative action clauses in their anti-discrimination legislation.

The next section details the variables and the analytical technique used to test this proposition.

4. Research design

4.1. Data and sample

To empirically test hypothesis 2, I build a dataset of 102 governments nested in eight post-communist EU democracies and candidate countries. They countries are observed between 1991 and 2015, yielding 188 observations. The countries include Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia,[50] Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and Romania. The choice of countries was determined by the availability of the original data on party

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[50] Croatia enters the sample in 2003 after it became a democracy, according to Polity IV rankings (http://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html).

promises on gender equality. Introduction explains this limitation and the guiding motivation in detail.

4.2. Dependent variable

The dependent variable measures whether an affirmative action clause has been included into the anti-discrimination legislation or policy. It is coded as one if it has been the case and zero otherwise. By affirmative action, as noted above, I understand any clause that explicitly promotes the inclusion of women in the labor market by giving them preferential treatment, reverse occupational self-selection along gender lines in education or seeks to increase female participation in the professions/roles where women have been traditionally underrepresented (this, however, excludes political quotas). These types of measures, thus, explicitly seek to alleviate the structural disadvantage of women as a group (Celis 2008) and promote the inclusion of the underrepresented gender group in training, employment and self-employment, decision making positions as well as active labor market programs designed specifically for women. A few specific examples provide further illustration.

For instance, article 24(1) in the Bulgarian Law on Protection Against Discrimination (2003) states: "The employer must, at the beginning of the employment…encourage persons belonging to under represented sex or ethnic group, to apply for a certain job or position".[51] Similarly, article 9(2) of the Croatian Gender Equality Act (2008) reads: "Specific measures shall be introduced on a temporary basis with a view to achieving genuine equality of women and men and they shall not be deemed to be discrimination". These measures are aimed at increasing the representation

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[51] https://www.stopvaw.org/Bulgaria2.html

of the underrepresented sex "in order for its representation to reach the level of its percentage in the total population of the Republic of Croatia" (ILO). Appendices 3 and 4 summarize these policies in detail.

Figure 4 provides an illustration of where in the CEE affirmative actions clauses have been adopted. To simplify the graph, I do not include the time dimension in it but report it below. Out of eight countries in the sample, Romania, Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia have not adopted any policy measures to further affirmative action for women as a group whereas North Macedonia did so in 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2012, the Czech Republic in 2001, Croatia in 2003, 2006, 2008, and Bulgaria in 2003.[52]

Figure 4. Affirmative action clauses in anti-discrimination and gender equality legislation in CEE democracies, 1991-2015
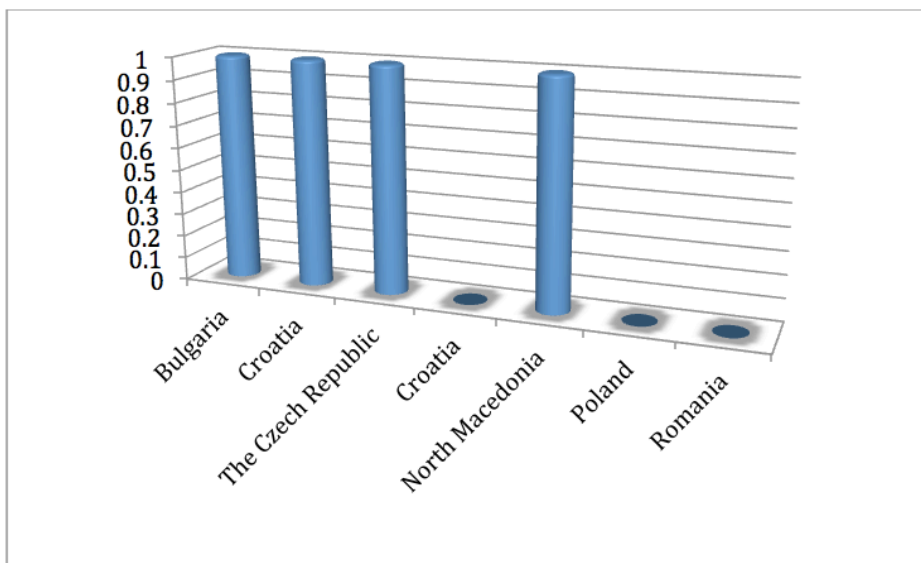
Source: Author's calculations.

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[52] The dependent variable is constructed via human content analysis of the anti-discrimination pieces of legislation, government decrees, and policies in each respective country, retrieved from the Equality of opportunity and treatment section in the Database on national, labor, social security and related human rights by the International Labor Organization (https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.byCountry?p_lang=en).

4.3. Independent variables

Political, institutional, and structural factors are the key drivers behind policy changes in democracies. Political will to deliver a certain policy always tops this list. What gets on the political agenda very much depends on what was put in the electoral programs of the parties now in government as well as on the policy space the government seeks to intervene it, as the theoretical chapter details.

The variable that measures political factors is specified in two different ways to check for the robustness of the findings. First, I specify it as a continuous variable measured as a sum of gender equality scores of each government party weighted by their seat share in parliament. This measure reflects the coalitional nature of most CEE governments. Theoretically, this variable can range from 0 (gender equality issues are not salient for any party in the government) to 100 (all government parties dedicate all their attention to gender equality), which does not exist in empirical reality. For the most part, government gender equality scores range between 0 and 4.7 (observed in Croatia in 2008), with the mean of .24 and the standard deviation of .43. It is easy to notice based on these low scores that gender equality is not the key issue on the agenda of most CEE governments. Nevertheless, these scores also show that some governments do pay attention to gender equality issues while other governments ignore them completely (scores of 0), which should explain why gender equality policies emerge on the agenda of some governments and not others.

Figure 5 below presents these differences. It compares the share of the CEE governments, in which parties campaigned on gender equality issues, with the

governments, for whom gender equality remains obsolete. Figure 5 demonstrates that for most governments in North Macedonia, Lithuania, and the Czech Republic and for every government in Croatia, gender equality was part of the agenda, largely mirroring the saliency of this issue observed at the party level in chapter 2. By contrast, roughly half the governments in Bulgaria and Romania and most governments in Latvia and Poland do not include parties for whom gender equality has been a salient issue.

Figure 5. Share of governments committed to gender equality, 1991-2015

Graphs by country
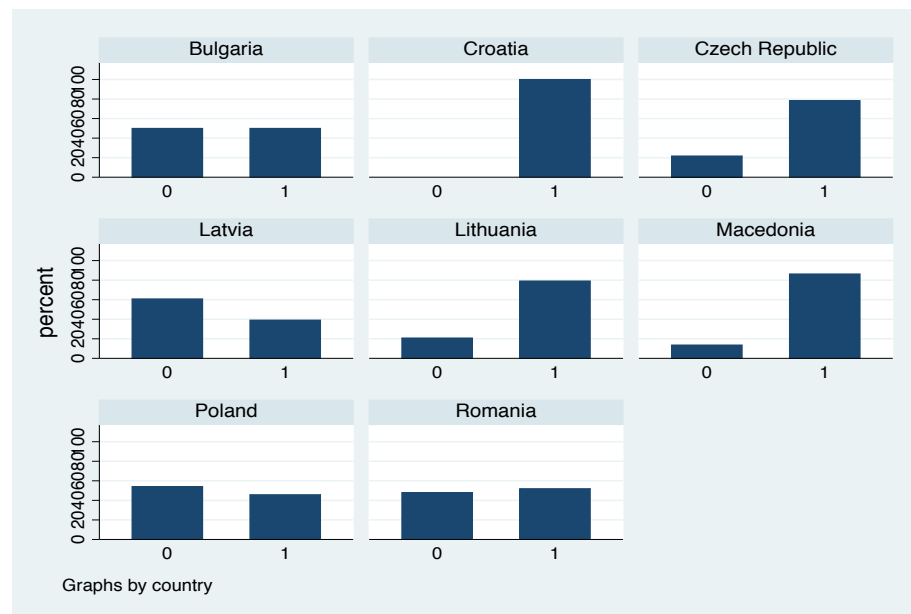
Note: 1 stands for governments committed to gender equality, 0 otherwise. "Czech Republic" stands for "The Czech Republic" and "Macedonia" stands for "North Macedonia".

Source: Author's calculations.

Alternatively, strong prime ministers have been found to dominate many CEE governments and policy-making (with the exception of Poland and Romania). Prime-ministers usually try to build consensus, force an issue, and streamline the decision-making process (Blondel 2007, 177-192). It appears that prime-ministers, though

primarily concerned with economic issues, especially in the beginning of transition, have

the power and influence to place gender equality issues on the agenda if they believe

these issues are important to them electorally or if they want to score points with the

European bureaucrats. Therefore, another way to specify the independent variable is to

examine whether a Prime Minister comes from the party that campaigned on gender

equality issues. This specification also accounts for gender equality being a salient issue

for the largest and strongest party in the coalition. This variable is binary, taking the

value of one if the Prime Minister comes from a government party for which gender

equality is a salient issue and zero if otherwise. Figure 6 depicts the distribution of this

variable. One can immediately notice that the share of the largest parties in the coalition

that cares about gender equality among CEE governments is less in comparison to the

share of governments for whom gender equality is a salient issue depicted in figure 5.

Figure 6. Share of CEE prime ministers committed to gender equality, 1991-2015
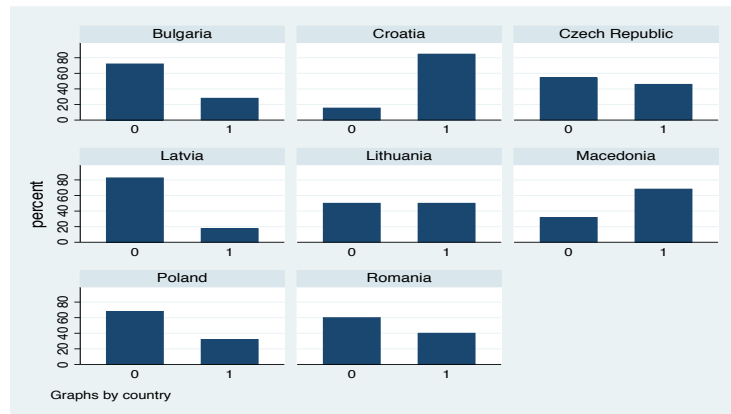
Notes: Zero stands for prime ministers that belong to the party that has made no electoral commitments to gender equality in their electoral manifesto, one indicates prime ministers from the parties committed to gender equality. "Czech Republic" stands for "The Czech Republic" and "Macedonia" stands for "North Macedonia".
Source: Author's calculations.

Besides political will to enact a given policy, institutional constraints may play a big role in restricting or supporting policy innovation. As early as 2000, Tsebelis persuasively argues that policy innovation effectively decreases as the number of veto players increases in a political system. Institutional constraints have been named to be a leading mediating factor for the (non-)compliance with the EU norms (Avdeyeva 2015; Cowles et al. 2001). To measure the strength of the institutional constraints in a given political system, I borrow the *political constraints index III* variable from the *V-Dem project*.[53] The variable represents an index that varies between 0 and 1, where one indicates no feasibility of policy change due to an extremely constrained institutional environment:

This index measures the feasibility of policy change, i.e. the extent to which a change in the preferences of any one political actor may lead to a change in government policy. The index is composed from the following information: the number of independent branches of government with veto power over policy change, counting the executive and the presence of an effective lower and upper house in the legislature (more branches leading to more constraint); the extent of party alignment across branches of government, measured as the extent to which the same party or coalition of parties control each branch (decreasing the level of constraint); and the extent of preference heterogeneity within each legislative branch, measured as legislative fractionalization in the relevant house (increasing constraint for aligned executives, decreasing it for opposed executives) (2010, 372).

No country in my sample scores one on this variable. The most constrained institutional environment (0.68) existed in Poland in 1992-1993 due to an extremely fragmented legislature (Poland had 29 parties in parliament at the time who were unable to make any policy for two years (Curry 2011) and in Romania in 1993-1996 (for the same reason, Romanian Democratic Convention Alliance that won 34 seats was a coalition of 18 parties and no party obtained a clear majority with Iliescu's party

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[53] https://www.v-dem.net/en/

controlling 1/3 of the parliamentary seats (Gledhill and King 2011)). The least

constrained institutional environment existed in Latvia in 1991-1993 and Poland in 1991.

In both cases, it can possibly be due to the remnants of the communist past still clinging

for power. The average score across the sample is .47. Figure 7 further details the

variation in the political constraints variable in each country over time.

Figure 7. Strength of institutional constraints in post-communist democracies, 1991-2015
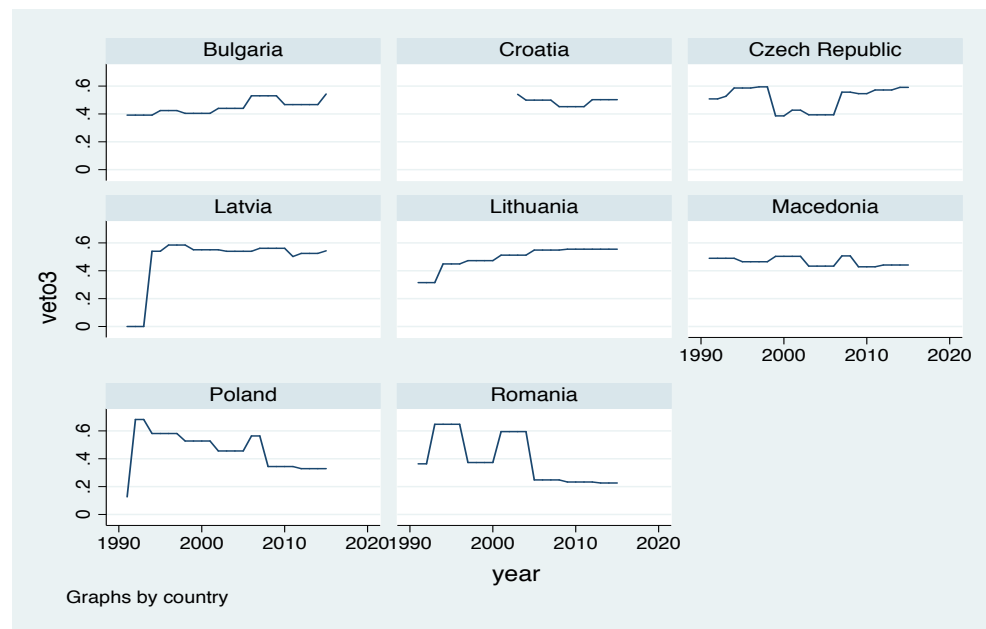
Note: "Czech Republic" stands for "The Czech Republic" and "Macedonia" stands
for "North Macedonia".
Source: Author's calculations.

Minority governments, or governments, in which the strongest party has the

plurality of seats in the legislature but is unable to form a coalition, presents another

constraint on policy making (Seki and Williams 2014). It is believed that it is harder for

the minority governments to pass their policy initiatives because they do not have the

parliamentary support as in the case of a coalitional government. Non-governing parties

may or may not extend such support in each particular case (Linz 1978; Powell 1982;

Tsebelis 2000). Furthermore, given that the governing party has not been able to form a coalition signals that such parliamentary support is unlikely. Otherwise, the differences would have been resolved and compromises with other parties would have been forged at the stage of the coalition building (Powell 1982, 142-143).

The variable comes from Seki and Williams (2014) dataset. It measures various types of governments and ranges from 1 to 6, with one representing single party governments, 2 – minimal winning coalition, 3 – surplus coalition, 4 – single party minority governments, 5 – multiparty minority government, 6 – caretaker government (no serious policy making is intended). As this variable increases, the constraints on policy-making increase as well. Overall, minimal winning coalitions prevail across the countries over the years (36% of the governments) followed by surplus coalitional governments (25%). Minority governments are rather frequent as well. Single party minority governments and multiparty minority governments combined equal 33%.

The distribution of the types of governments varies across countries as well. Single party governments are almost non-existent in the region, with only Bulgaria and Lithuania experiencing them from time to time. By contrast, Romanian and Croatian governments are almost exclusively minority governments (60% and 78%, respectively). No minority governments are reported in Poland, North Macedonia, and Latvia. Most governments are coalitional governments in these countries. For instance, in Poland, 62% of governments are minimum winning coalitions and in North Macedonia, most governments are surplus coalitions (71%). In the Czech Republic, there is a close distribution between minority (38%) and coalition governments (54%). Similarly, in Bulgaria, 34% are coalitional governments and 35% are minority ones.

Besides political and institutional factors, four other factors have been found in the literature to have an independent effect on policy outcomes when it comes to gender equality promotion – women's movements, the presence of female parliamentarians, the magnitude of the social problem, and the influence of the EU. To the discussion of these factors I now turn.

Feminist movements around the world have been the strongest advocates and proponents of gender equality in the labor market. For instance, Avdeyeva (2015) records a sizable effect of women's movements on the transposition of the EU gender equality legislation in post-communist countries. Other small-N studies further substantiate these claims (Banaszak 2006 (the cases of U.S. and Switzerland), Gelb 2003 (U.S. and Japan), Hantrais 2000 (established EU democracies), Einhorn 1993a (the cases of Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany)).

To measure this variable in the CEE, I use the same variable I use in chapter 2. It measures the strength and independence of feminist movements that explicitly focus on gender equality promotion in a given country in a given year because these types of movements have been found to have the most pronounced impact on the policy making, especially when it comes to symbolic policies, as the ones examined in this study (Htun and Weldon 2018). The variable ranges from 0 (no movement) to 4 (strong independent movement that explicitly focuses on political advocacy of gender equality issues by running large media awareness raising campaigns or organizing political protests), with a mean of 2 and a standard deviation of 1.5. The strongest movements exist in North Macedonia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Croatia, with most movements gaining more strength after 2010 when public protests and other awareness raising

campaigns have become more pronounced in the region. To remind the reader, I construct this variable via a qualitative analysis of the materials in *LexisNexis*, UN and European NGO databases as well as NGO websites.

Another factor that can affect the adoption of gender equality policies are women in parliament. Though contemporary feminist scholarship recognizes the diversity of groups of women and their interests, it argues that women remain a structurally disadvantaged group. Thus, female representatives serve a dual role as descriptive representatives for all women and as "standing for" women's specific needs as a group (Celis 2008; Pitkin 1967). "A critical mass" of at least 30 percent is required to achieve this goal of effectively "standing for women" (Staudt 1996, 38).

Empirical studies of advanced democracies have been consistent in pointing out the differences in political behavior and preferences between male and female representatives and have shown that women, in general, prioritize social issues more (for a review of these studies see Henderson and Jeydel 2014 and Squires 2007). Nevertheless, other studies contend that "female parliamentarians may be less representative of female voters than male parliamentarians are of male voters" (Mateo Diaz 2005, 201).

Similar mixed findings have been observed in the CEE states. On the one hand, in Bulgaria, female parliamentarians followed the program of the party they represented (Kostova 1998). On the other hand, early in transition in Romania female parliamentarians saw themselves as specialists on women's issues and wanted to address women's social and economic problems (Fischer 1998). Similarly, female parliamentarians worked across the isle in Poland in early post-transition years (Siemieńska 2009).

I expect having higher numbers of female parliamentarians to be associated with higher probabilities of the adoption of the affirmative action clauses. Figure 8 illustrates the steady increase in the number of women in CEE parliaments across all the countries but Croatia, Bulgaria and Latvia after 2010. The decrease in numbers observed in Croatia, Latvia, and Bulgaria since 2010 may be associated with the rise to power of the populist parties. Though some studies suggest that CEE populist parties nominate women candidates in higher numbers and get them elected more than programmatic parties in Bulgaria and Poland (Kostadinova and Mikulska 2017), other studies, relying on different research designs, challenge these findings and report no significant differences between populist parties and liberal parties in fostering women's representation in Poland. If anything, liberal parties advance women more, in line with more conventional expectations (Jankowski and Marcinkiewich 2018).

On average, there are about 18.7% (+/- 6.4%) of female representatives in the CEE parliaments, with the lowest number of representatives recorded at 3.3% in North Macedonia in 1997-1998 and the highest (at 34.1%) in North Macedonia in 2013 (likely a result of political quota adoption). Romania also has the number of female

parliamentarians below the sample average. Its score ranges from 7.3% in 1997 to 13.7% in 2015. The data are drawn from the United Nations Human Development Reports.[54] The variable ranges from 0 (no female representatives) to 100 (all parliamentarians are female).

Figure 8. Seat share of female parliamentarians in CEE countries, 1991-2015
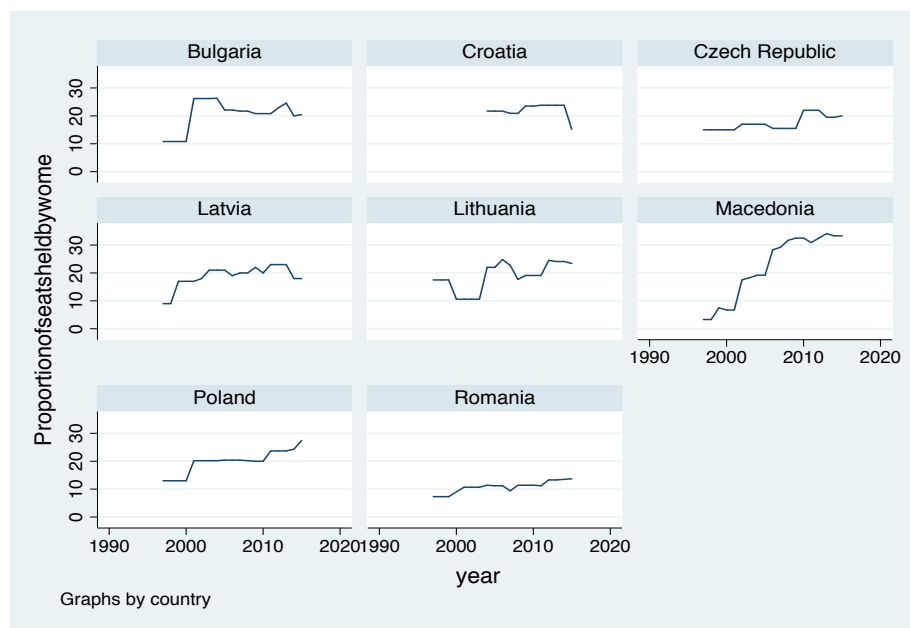
Note: "Czech Republic" stands for "The Czech Republic" and "Macedonia" stands for "North Macedonia".
Source: Author's calculations.

In addition to the factors outlined above, governments may be responding to the existence of an objective social problem in the process of policy making. Studies on other policy domains such as law and order (Wenzelburger 2014) and economic policy (Roberts 2010) show that governing parties, indeed, respond to social problems during

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[54] http://hdr.undp.org

policy-making. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that if there are already plenty of women in the labor market, there is no urgent need to further promote their inclusion through affirmative action. Therefore I expect a negative association in this case.

Earlier studies show that the integration of women into the labor force was high on the agenda of the post-communist transition governments. What is more, it aligned with the desire of most post-communist women to remain in the labor force since "only a minority [of them] want[ed] to become permanent homemakers (Rueschemeyer 1998, 290-291). This variable comes from the World Bank World Development Indicators Database.[55] It ranges from 0 to 100 and measures the share of female employment relative to the employed in the total population. There is not much variation in female employment across CEE countries. The variable ranges between 38% in North Macedonia in various years and 51% in Lithuania in various years, with the sample mean of 45% and a standard deviation of 3%.

Finally, a large body of literature on the Europeanization of domestic public policies studies the compliance and non-compliance of the member and candidate states with the EU norms (Avdeyeva 2015; Lombardo and Forest 2012; Martinsen 2007). Most studies in this tradition rely on the top-down approach, leaving little room for domestic government policy innovation. Some take it a step further and explore the domestic barriers that exist on the way of compliance (Avdeyeva 2015; Cowels, Caporasso, Risse 2001). Even fewer task themselves with the exploration of over compliance, which is essentially what the case of affirmative action policies is. The EU candidacy and membership is expected to positively affect the probability of the adoption of the anti-

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[55] https://datacatalog.worldbank.org/dataset/world-development-indicators

discrimination legislation (analysis not reported here), but it should have no effect on the adoption of the affirmative action policies. I keep it in the model to control for the possible effect of the "soft norm" of gender equality promotion, given that the EU recommends affirmative action measures. The variable comes from the Manifesto Project Dataset (2017) and is described in detail in chapter 2.

Having discussed the key dependent and independent variables, I now turn to the discussion of the model and an estimation technique.

5. The model

To test hypothesis 2 empirically, I employ a discrete time event history model, namely logistic regression that models the probability of an event occurrence (λ_i) and allows estimation of time-variant covariates (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004). An event is an adoption of the affirmative action clause, measured as 1 if a policy was adopted and a 0 otherwise. The functional form of this model is as follows:

$$\log (\lambda_i/1-\lambda_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \ldots \beta_k \mathbf{X}_{ki} \tag{1}$$

Equation (1) specifies λ_i in terms of the log-odds ratios of the probability of an event occurrence to the probability of its non-occurrence. In this equation, x1 is the key variable of interest – government position on gender equality and $\mathbf{X}_{ki}$ represents the vector of the control variables discussed in the previous section. These variables include the share of female representatives in the parliament, the share of female labor force participation, the strength of women's movements, institutional veto players, a type of government as well EU membership status.

All models are estimated using MLE estimation technique with robust standard errors clustered by country to correct for heteroscedasticity and possible autocorrelation (Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004, 114-115).[56] I use STATA 13 statistical software package to run this analysis.

6. Analysis and discussion

Table 4 presents the results of the analysis.

Table 4. Determinants of affirmative action clause adoption in CEE democracies, 1990-2015

	Model 1	Model 2
Government's position on gender equality	1.38*** (.233)	-
Prime minister	-	3.09*** (.83)
Type of government	.237 (.348) (11.2)	.194 (.572)
Veto players	2.59 (9.77)	.297 (10.42)
Strength of feminist movements	.478 (1.3)	.155 (1.6)
Share of female labor force participation	-.047 (.11)	-.147 (.12)
Women in parliament (seat share in %)	.27*** (.082)	.304*** (.123)
EU membership	-1.92* (1.1)	-1.14 (1.19)
Constant	-8.15 (5.05)	-5.06 (4.39)
N	137	139
Pseudo R-sq	0.4053	0.3962
Entries are logit coefficients with cluster robust standard errors in parentheses. *p<.1 **p<.05, *** p≤.01		

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[56] Models with time-splines do not alter the results.

The coefficients from the logistic regression output are not very telling and require additional calculations for substantive interpretation. The raw coefficients indicate the direction of a variable's effect (Long and Freese 2014). For instance, negative coefficients on female labor force participation variable mean that higher levels of female labor force participation are associated with the lower probability of the adoption of the affirmative action provisions, in line with my expectations, but this effect is not statistically significant.

To examine the magnitude effect of the key variables of interest – government's position on gender equality, feminist movements, and female parliamentarians, I calculate predicted probabilities for each independent variable of interest, and the findings are quite interesting. To recall, I expect that governments, in which parties campaigned on gender equality, to be more likely to adopt affirmative gender equality policies. The data offer support for this hypothesis, regardless of how the independent variable is specified. Substantively, it means that governments with parties, which take a favorable position on gender equality promotion in their manifestos as well as governments led by prime ministers from such parties, increase the probability of the adoption of the affirmative action clauses. Holding other variables at their observed values, one standard deviation (.43) increase in the saliency of gender equality issues for a government weighted by the parliamentary strength of the composite parties increases the probability of the affirmative action policies by .044, and this relationship is also statistically significant (p=.035).

Figure 9 presents this relation. It shows that there are marked differences in the probabilities of the affirmative action clause adoptions between the governments for

whom gender equality is salient in comparison to the governments for whom it is not, as evidenced by the steep rise in the curve that begins at about 1.5.

Figure 9. Predicted probabilities of the affirmative action clause adoption based on the saliency of gender equality for governments (other variables are held at their means)
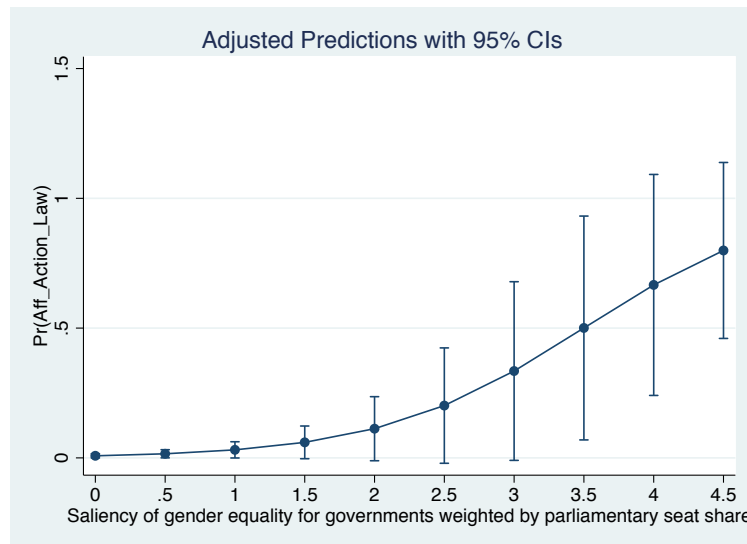
Source: Author's calculations.

Having a prime minister from a party that has prioritized gender equality issues in their manifesto relative to prime ministers from the parties that have not increase the probability of affirmative action adoption by 0.182, holding other variables at their observed values. The probability increases from .05 to .233, and this relationship is statistically significant (p=0.00).

The fact that parties appear to fulfill their mandates when it comes to gender equality provides further evidence in support of Kostadinova and Kostadinova (2016) finding that policy domain matters when it comes to mandate fulfillment. It further means that political parties remain a force behind gender equality promotion in the public domain in the CEE region, contrary to what prior studies have found (Einhorn 2006; Htun and Weldon 2018; Kostelecky 2002; Ristova 2003; Rueschemeyer 1998).

Further, in line with the findings on advanced democracies (Norris 1987), women in CEE parliaments matter for the adoption of the affirmative gender equality clauses. These findings challenge the conclusion of some qualitative studies that conservative female parliamentarians impede women's rights promotion in the region (Krupavićius and Matonité 2003; Siemenska 2009; Wolchik 2009). My analysis suggests that one standard deviation increase in the share of women in parliament, that is an increase by 6%, increases the probability of the affirmative action adoption by 0.08 (from .051 to .131, p=.001, holding other variables at their observed values).

Two mechanisms can be behind this result. First, women in the CEE parliaments are disciplined when it comes to adhering to party positions on a given issue (Ghodsee 2009; Kostova 1998; Siemeńska 2009; Wolchik 2009). This means that if a party takes a favorable position on gender equality promotion, so will they.

Second, some conservative female parliamentarians may rally behind the adoption of symbolic gender equality policies because they see these policies as not requiring additional monetary resources as well as potential revenue sources in the form of fines, as

was the case of the adoption of The Anti-Discrimination Law in Bulgaria, which also included affirmative action provisions (Ghodsee 2009).

The data, on the other hand, offer no evidence that feminist organizations are behind affirmative action clauses in the region, though the coefficients have the expected sign (positive association). This finding challenges Htun and Weldon (2018) who attribute the adoption of status gender policies to strong and independent feminist movements. I suggest that this happens due to the weakness of the institutionalized lobbying channels in the CEE[57] and the overall unpopularity and mistrust of feminist movements in the region (Einhorn 2006), which leads to an increased competition between civil society actors for the attention of policy-makers.

Based on the QUING reports, feminist movements that work on gender equality have not been particularly impactful in the policy-making process on gender equality issue across the region, Croatia being a relative exception (Dedić 2007). Very often they are denied a seat at the table and their expertise is not sought out (Dabrowska 2007; Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007; Popa 2007; Putnina 2007; Röder 2007; Stoykova 2007). As Pilinkaite-Sotirovic (2007, 75) puts it: "Civil society is still weak and only reacts to the policy development instead of bringing powerful initiatives to change policy discourse. Also, civil society is still ignored by the state bodies as a potential social partner when it comes to gender equality (ibid).

For example, feminist NGO leaders in Bulgaria report that there is little interest among female parliamentarians to work with the NGOs on the issue of women's rights

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[57] As Tisheva, the Director of the Bulgarian Gender Research Foundation in 2004 notes: "Building cooperation between the feminist NGOs and the government 'takes time' (Ghodsee 2009, 181).

advocacy and that politicians only reach out to the feminist NGOs when it suits their political goals of self-promotion and gaining a name for themselves (Ghodsee 2009). Similar situation has been observed in Lithuania. The Equal Gender Opportunity Law (1998) that does not include any affirmative action provisions "did not receive much feedback from women's organizations," despite them organizing "conferences, meetings, and debates about gender equality in the workplaces" (Krupavičius and Matonyté 2003, 201).

Even if feminist organizations are invited to the table, they still need to compete with other civil society groups that represent alternative views on family policy and gender relations, which may result in unfavorable compromises in the realm of gender equality or other civil society groups dominating the agenda (Krizsán and Popa 2018).

7. Conclusion

The key finding of the study is that parties and their position on gender equality matter when it comes to gender equality promotion in CEE countries, though further studies should test if these findings hold if the sample is extended to all CEE EU member and candidate states. It is also worth noting that the adoption of the affirmative action policies is only the first step towards substantive gender equality. A big part of the solution to the gender inequality problem rests on the effective implementation of these policies. Subsequent studies should examine in detail such implementation efforts.

These limitations notwithstanding, my findings speak to the broader emerging literature on democratic responsiveness of governments in new democracies and show that political parties fulfill their mandates to promote gender equality, once in office,

while previous studies found only limited effect of such mandate fulfillment in the economic policy domain (Roberts 2010; Stokes 2001).[58]

To explain these differences, I suggest a compensation hypothesis. Since economic policy making remains rather contentious in the region and involves the issues of redistribution and there has been a history of government action on gender issues in public domain, parties may rely on symbolic gender policies to boost their image in the eyes of the voters by later bringing their attention to the mandate fulfillment in this area. This tentative explanation requires further tests of how often and under which circumstances parties actually use their past accomplishments in gender equality promotion in their campaigns. My reading of the party programs suggests that they do. Most parties, especially in Croatia, do not waste an opportunity to let their voters know of what was done to promote women's rights during their tenure in office.

At the same time, the finding that CEE governing parties fulfill their mandates when it comes to gender issues within the public realm can be a sign of concern rather than hope, given the rise of the right-wing populist parties to power in Bulgaria, Poland, and Hungary in recent years. It means that these parties can also potentially act on their mandate in the symbolic realm of gender politics and, in turn, initiate policies that promote traditional gender values these parties have been so vocal about. In the words of the leader of the Polish Law and Justice, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the "EU membership was the shortest way for Poland to achieve parity when it comes to living standards with its western allies but that doesn't mean we should … become infected with social diseases

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[58] Given that not all post-communist democracies have been included in the sample (due to language constraints), further studies will need to test whether these findings are robust when all EU post-communist democracies are included in the sample.

[in reference, to gender equality and LGBTQ inclusivity] that dominate there" (Sobczak and Frorkiewicz 2018). Thus, future research should examine the position of right-wing populist parties on gender issues and their translation into public policies, if any.

The finding that governing parties and not feminist movements advance symbolic gender equality in the public realm in the region provides systematic evidence in support of the qualitative studies on the issue but challenges a large body of feminist scholarship that links women's rights promotion, especially in symbolic realm, with the strength of feminist movements (for a review, see Htun and Weldon 2018). Therefore, another important avenue for future research is to systematically and cross-nationally investigate the barriers feminist organizations in the region face when it comes to political advocacy and participation in the policy-making process on the issues of gender equality. I, however, now turn my attention to another symbolic policy that seeks to transform traditional gender roles but now the government is required to act in the semi-private sphere of family that concerns child rearing. This policy is father's leave.

Chapter 5

Government responsiveness in the semi-private sphere: Father's leave

1. Introduction

In 2014, a special Eurobarometer survey on gender equality was fielded. It reports the marked differences in gender attitudes between Western and Eastern member states. 87% of Poles and Latvians and 80% of Lithuanians are the least likely to agree that equality between men and women is a fundamental right whereas respondents from Western Europe affirm or firmly affirm this right (2016, 9). Furthermore, perceptions of gender roles remain traditionalist in the CEE member states, and this situation has not improved at the time of writing (see Eurobarometer 2019 results). Only 39% (vs. 61% in old member states) of respondents in new member states agree that men should work more in childcare sectors and 58% (vs. 47%) agree that men are less competent than women at household tasks and that fathers should put their career ahead of the provision of childcare for his young child (38% vs. 27%) (Eurobarometer 2016, 15).

Nevertheless, a brief look across the region shows the introduction of non-transferrable father's leave that can be taken at birth of the child in many of the CEE countries, despite no EU legislation that mandates it. For instance, it was introduced in Bulgaria in 2009, in Poland in 2008, in Romania in 1999, in Latvia in 2000, and in Lithuania in 2006. In 2015, no father's leave existed in the Czech Republic, Croatia, and North Macedonia.

Why is this the case? In line with my prior argument, parties should matter, given that the locus of government action is a semi-private sphere of the family. Namely, the long tradition of government engagement with family policy concerning care and

reproduction makes father's leave more amenable for government intervention, as this policy is usually introduced among the last ones in the nexus of family policies.

The analysis in chapter 2, however, has shown limited engagement of CEE parties with this specific area, suggesting just a limited mandate on the issue. Nevertheless, chapter 2 has also shown that gender equality is a salient issue for many CEE countries. It has also demonstrated that many parties when talking about gender equality in the labor market also discuss gender equality in the family, even if they do not specify father's leave as a policy measure they intend to implement. The question then arises of whether parties in the government extend this gender equality mandate to also adopt father's leave policies, thus, furthering gender equality? The short answer is yes, they do.

To offer a more detailed answer, this chapter proceeds as follows. It first discusses the concept of leaves and unpacks the normative underpinnings of these policies that remain highly debated and controversial in social policy analysis. Thus, it offers a comprehensive survey of approaches to the study of family policy and their critique, which has rarely been done in the past scholarship. It then introduces the historical background of the CEE leave policies and their current transformations as well the current EU policy trends on the issue. The chapter continues with the tests of competing explanations behind the introduction of father's leave policy, conceiving mandates both narrowly and broadly, and presents the results of the analysis. In what follows from the analysis, the parties do not directly fulfill the mandate in this policy area, if mandates are defined narrowly as pledges, since only limited mandates on this specific issue have been obtained. This ostensibly contradicts the theoretical framework

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presented in chapter 3. However, if one expands the notion of a mandate to include gender equality, then father's leave policies, indeed, result from such mandates.

2.1. The challenges of studying leave policies

Researchers who study parental leave policies face two major challenges. The first challenge lies in the "complex designs and multidimensionality" of these policies. They "simultaneously incorporate complex rules about financing, coverage, eligibility for both mothers and fathers, benefit structures, duration, and flexibility vis-à-vis intermittent and part-time take-up" (Ray et al. 2010, 198). The complex normative underpinnings of each mix of these policies based on their ability to transform gender relations in the family presents the second challenge. These normative underpinnings generate fierce debates about the consequences of these policies for all the stakeholders – women, children, men, employers, and governments. The potential clash of visions and framing of the appropriateness of government intervention into this semi-private domain at the EU and at the local level are also present in these debates.

While feminist scholars argue for gender equality and de-familialization to be the yardstick measure of leave policy success (Lewis 1992; Orloff 1993), they disagree on how to achieve this universally for women and men across class lines. Other scholars problematize the idea of family friendly policies all together (Hakim 2006). What is more, the clash of these visions for family support does not neatly map into existing political cleavages because parties on the right and on the left express their support for families, both at the European and the member-state level (Hloušek and Kopeček 2010). For instance, take Hungary since 2010. Though it is not included in the sample it offers an illustration of how a populist right party, *Fidesz*, advocates family pro-natalist policies

that in reality are aimed at increasing the births of white Christian children that are expected to be raised in two parent middle-class heterosexual households.[59] Generous paid maternity leaves are part of their plan. The party has gone great lengths as to include their vision of a traditional family into the Hungarian Constitution, which since 2012 defines family ties based on the relationship between parents and children (Pivarnyik 2018).

Besides the controversies with an ideological alignment of parental leave policies, another challenge in studying these policies lies in viewing them as part of a gender policy regime (Lewis 1992, 1997; Morgan 2001; Orloff 1993; Pfau-Effinger 1998; Sümer 2009). Path-dependence plays a big role in sustaining the existing policies, which become much harder to repeal (Hemerijck 2013; Pierson 1994). All CEE member states in the study, for example, had maternity and parental leaves significantly exceeding the EU minimum requirements at the time of accession (Avdeyeva 2015, 20). I note, however, that before becoming a part of a gendered welfare regime, each policy measure has been introduced by different actors and with different goals in mind. That is why the focus of this chapter is on father's leave, which is a policy innovation for all the countries region.

2.2. Conceptualizing leave policies

Though the primary focus of this chapter is father's leave, it would be incomplete without the discussion of leave policies in general. Leave policies are further categorized as part of social policies. Social policies are policies that seek to recalibrate the distribution of risks that arise from one's dual role as an employee and a caregiver among the individual, the family, the market, and the government. Leave policies are one

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[59] Skype interview with a country specialist, 01/10/2020.

possible family policy instrument, which is usually supplemented by family allowances (universal or means-tested) and childcare provision (supplied publicly or privately). Some analysts also add care for the elderly to this mix (Esping-Andersen 1999). Together, these mixes of policy instruments are known as policy regimes (O'Connor 1999, 12) and are typically analyzed together to assess their impact on various stakeholders and their transformative potential on gender relations (i.e., Sümer 2009). Though insightful and comprehensive, such institutionalist analyses, however, remain descriptive and overshadow the driving forces behind each policy innovation, a limitation that this chapter tries to overcome by focusing on one policy innovation at a time and systematic cross-national and over-time tests of the impact of different actors behind its promotion.

When it comes to leaves, three types are usually identified. Maternity leave (or pregnancy and childbirth leave) is usually provided for working mothers during the last weeks of her pregnancy and for a short time after birth and recovery. Maternity leaves are usually non-transferrable and are exclusive to mothers. Parental leave, also known as a childcare leave, usually follows the maternity leave. It can be an exclusive family right or an individual right of each parent. It can be transferrable and non-transferrable, meaning each parent should take their portion of leave, or lose this time. It can specifically allocate some time off for the father, but often the allocation of time with the child is left at the discretion of the parents, so most fathers forgo this leave and let mothers use all of it. Finally, there is a specific time after the birth of the child granted to the working fathers to fully participate in the care of the newborn, bond, and assist the recovering mother

(Htun and Weldon 2018, 178; Tanaka and Waldfogel 2007). I refer to this leave as father's leave.

The primary goal of these leave policies is to supplement the policies of female labor market activation, some of which have been discussed in chapter 4. Unavoidably, all these policies have implicit assumptions about whether reproduction and childcare are public or private affairs and which labor is valued as well as how far the state is willing to step into the private sphere to regulate the gender roles. As I discuss in chapter 3, each European state has moved this issue into the semi-private sphere.

2.3. Normative foundations of leave policies

A vast literature debates the normative underpinnings of social policy regimes in general (Lewis 1992; Morgan 2001; Orloff 1993; Pfau-Effinger 1998; Sümer 2009), and leave schemes in particular (Dearing 2016; Weldon-Jonhs 2013). CEE countries, however, have received significantly less attention in these debates (for a notable exception see, Javornik 2014; Pascall and Kwak 2005). This section discusses these developments in turn, beginning with the seminal work of Costa Esping-Andersen, which has laid the foundations for the development of the feminist literature on gendered social policy regimes.

Costa Esping-Andersen in "Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism" (1990) argues that based on how risks are distributed among the individual, the market, and the employers and whether protection against these risks is perceived as a social right or a social benefit, more or less egalitarian regimes of social policies emerge. The least egalitarian and the least universalist social policy regime is found in liberal welfare states, such as the United States and the United Kingdom. In this regime, social benefits are

residual and provided on a means-tested basis. Limited protection is afforded to the individual from the adversities of the labor market and most risks are placed within the individual (hence, labor is highly commodified in these regimes). Social-democratic welfare states,[60] on the other hand, afford significant "labor decommodification". Esping-Andersen defines "decommodification" as the ability of citizens to opt out of work when they themselves consider it necessary without the potential loss of job, income, or general welfare (1990, 23). "Benefits (health insurance, pension, maternity leave, unemployment insurance) equal to normal earnings" serve as indicators of labor decommodification (23); and these benefits are framed as social rights and afforded on the universal basis, thus redistributing the risks away from the individual worker. Finally, in conservative welfare regimes the benefits are tied to the working individuals and provided through the employers. There is little solidarity and universality in the provision of these benefit schemes, and homemakers are excluded from them (Esping-Andersen 1990).

What stands out, nevertheless, is the non-inclusion of the division of care between men and women in the family as well as the division of care between the state, the market, and the family. This pronounced absence of the gendered dimension in this typology of social policy regimes has triggered a stream of feminist scholarship that has sought to remedy this lacuna (see, for example, Lewis 1992, 1997; Orloff 1993;

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[60] On the grounds that welfare state is an institution that shelters workers from the adversities of the market and there was no market in the socialist economy, the socialist welfare state was not included in Esping-Andersen's typology. Other scientists, such as Goodin (1988), George and Manning (1980), share Esping-Andersen point of view. George and Manning point out that "theoretically there is no fundamental and unresolvable conflict of economic interests between various sections of the community" (1980, 165). Besides, socialist welfare state covers not only education, health and social security but housing and subsidies for transport and food (Ibid, 168). A case can be made, however, to group socialist welfare states with social-democratic welfare state because of their pronounced labor decommodification, egalitarianism, universalism, and solidarity. Yet, adding a gendered dimension to the analysis becomes problematic, as discussed below.

Sainsbury 1994) and led to the addition of the fourth dimension – the degree of de-familialization to the typology (Esping-Andersen 1999, 1). De-familialization is the concept designed by the feminist scholars to describe the degree of autonomy afforded to women "to form and maintain an autonomous household" (Orloff 1993, 319).

Assessment of the degree of de-familialization afforded by a social policy regime to women has been a fruitful avenue for research. It appears that both maternity and parental leave allow for some degree of de-familialization. It is hard to deny that maternity leave policies are beneficial for women because they accommodate their unique life experiences of transition to motherhood that are often associated not only with the challenges of adjusting one's life to the presence of another highly needy and dependent human being in the household but also with health risks and physical recovery that giving birth entails. The general normative assessment is favorable for this type of policy, with the exception of schemes that afford it on a non-paid basis (the only advanced democracy that continues to do so is the US) and schemes that apply only to the working women or do not guarantee the job preservation. In other words, the policy scheme that affords the least de-familialization is non-universal maternity leave without job protection, due to pervasive discrimination in the labor market against women with small children.

The situation is more complicated with parental leave. Some analysts argue that this policy tool, especially if parental leaves exceed one year and are non-transferable to men, can be used as an alternative for the state provision of childcare. This further solidifies the traditional gender role of women as primary caregivers and engenders their exit from the labor market (Genre et al. 2010). Long parental leaves have been

deliberately used in the transition period of the CEE countries to mitigate the high unemployment rates and keep women at home (Lipsmeyer 2000; Rebeleanu et al. n.d.). Alternatively, governments introduce this leave scheme to address the fertility concerns when large numbers of women participate in the labor market and they have a choice not to become mothers. Previous descriptive studies linked the expansion of parental leave schemes to low fertility rates (Potûček 2008, 93; Wolchik 1992).

Another stream of primarily feminist scholars, however, contends that the maternity and parental leave schemes are still insufficient if the goal of social policy is to transform the existing social relations that assign women the role of caregivers and men the role of breadwinners. For them, true gender equality is achieved not only when women are offered more opportunities in the public sphere, namely the labor market, but when men are more engaged in childcare and domestic choirs (Fraser 1997; Gornick and Meyers 2003). A universal paid father's leave assigned specifically to fathers after the birth of a child is an example of such transformative gender policy. The goal of this policy is to send a signal to fathers that childcare is a shared responsibility, thus challenging and eventually transforming the traditional gender roles.

The approaches discussed above assume the universality of women's interests and aspirations and maintain that the appropriate policy mix may restructure the long-standing inequalities that women experience in the labor market and in the family. Objectively speaking, it is beneficial for women, as a group, to be protected and supported at the time of childbirth and early motherhood and to have access to the labor market and retirement schemes that come with such access. Similarly, it is beneficial to engage more fathers in domestic choirs and childcare due to the fragility of families and

partnerships and accessibility of divorce as well as the prevalence of domestic violence, the risk for which increases during pregnancy (Bohn 1990; Hillard 1985; Stark et al. 1979) and right after child birth (Mezey and Bewley 1997).

Nevertheless, each policy discussed above necessarily assigns a specific life trajectory to women. Namely, it frames women's role as a worker-mother or mother-worker or simply a worker without affording much possibility to choose a trajectory of full-time motherhood and be fully supported in this choice. From this perspective, a truly "women-friendly" policy, in my opinion, will be the one that a) affords a choice of life trajectory and fully supports such choice, b) assigns prestige to *any* of the life trajectories (Henderson and Jeydel 2014) as well as c) takes into account the variation in women's individual preferences (Hakim 2006). To my knowledge, countries in the world are yet to approach this ideal.

Having discussed the controversies of the normative underpinnings of leave policies, I now turn to the description of the actual leave policies in the CEE and the EU. I focus on their similarities and differences and explore their implications for gender relations, using the analytical framework discussed above. Given that social policies in general, and leave policies in particular, are highly path-dependent, a brief historical overview of these policies is in order. Also, it is this path-dependence along with a state's inherent interest in reproduction that permits a state to branch into a semi-private site and further expand the leave policies for father's, as argued in chapter 3.

3. Leave policies[61] in CEE and the EU

3.1. The legacy of communism: A historical background

It is a well-known fact that women in CEE have enjoyed lengthy maternity leaves under communism. What is less known, however, is that these leaves were not granted to women at the onset of the communist rule, let alone were they an instrument of gender equality promotion. Maternity leaves were introduced in the Czech Republic in the 1960s and in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Poland by late 1970s (Wolchik 1992). Only Romania did not have a paid maternity leave until the 1990s (Robila 2012). These policies were a reaction to the dropping fertility rates caused by large numbers of women having entered the labor force and by accessibility of abortions (as a response to the gender equality promotion by the communist regimes) and were aimed at "helping women deal with multiple roles" (Wolchik 1992, 126). Along with maternity leaves, state childcare services were provided as well as family allowances. Gender-neutral parental leave were also established, though women continued to disproportionately dominate care activities due to the limited reversal of traditional gender roles in the family (Wolchik 1992). High female participation in the labor market that was mandatory in communist regimes created dual-earner families, similarly to the Nordic states, but failed to transform the gendered relations into a dual-carer model (Pascall and Kwak 2005). The long-standing histories of parental leaves can potentially explain the political deactivation of this issue in the CEE and further justifies the focus of this chapter on the adoption of father's leave, which is a significant policy innovation for the CEE region, as noted earlier.

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[61] I deliberately avoid using the concept of gendered regimes, which is commonly applied to the description of any policy that has gender implications (Pfau-Effinger 1998; Sümer 2009) due to it being broader than leave policies. Nevertheless, I discuss the gender implications of such policies.

3.2 Leave policies in the EU

As already discussed in chapter 4, most EU policies in the realm of gender equality have economic underpinnings linked to the needs of female labor market activation and prevention of unfair competition among the EU member states that could have arisen from the significant differences in labor standards and social insurance schemes (Anderson 2015; Hantrais 2007; Kantola 2010). The framework of directives that seek to protect the health and jobs of female employees and establish work-life reconciliation is another side of the coin of formal equality in the labor market. This means that gender equality as a value in itself has not been high on the EU agenda. It changes around 2000 when it appears as a social right in Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union of 7 December 2000.

Among the EU directives on the subject, the *Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19 October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding* protects the health of pregnant workers by listing the hazardous working conditions pregnant and breastfeeding workers should be spared, frees this category from night shifts, provides for 14 weeks of maternity leave, as well as protects them from being dismissed for the duration of their leave.[62]

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[62] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1564601512565&uri=CELEX:31992L0085
These provisions were later reiterated by Equal Treatment of men and women directive (06/54/EU) further emphasizes non-discrimination against pregnant workers in article 9 and encourages social dialogue aimed at the establishment of flexible working arrangements (art 21(2)). Article 15 guarantees a return from leave to the same or equal position and article 16 discusses the protection of workers who choose to exercise their right to a paternity leave, given it exists in a member-state.

A brief look at the compliance section demonstrates that maternity protection in many CEE countries predates this directive. It was codified in the Labor code of Czechoslovakia in 1965, in Poland in 1974, and in Bulgaria in 1987.[63] Paid maternity leave also exceeds the EU standards and reflects the communist legacy. For example, Bulgaria offers 58 weeks of paid maternity leave (410 days), Croatia - 24 weeks, the Czech Republic - 28 weeks, Latvia 16 weeks (112 days), Lithuania 18 weeks (126 days), North Macedonia 42 weeks, Poland 20[64] and Romania 18 weeks (Robila 2012, 36).

Another step to improve the work-life balance has been taken with the adoption of 96/34/EU directive[65] that was later repealed by 2010/18/EU directive.[66] These directives seek to establish a better work-life balance by reconciling professional and parental responsibilities (clause 1, 96/34/EU), granting a three-month parental leave as an individual right on a non-transferable basis with the goal to promote equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women (clause 2, 96/34/EU). It also establishes employment protection of parents on leave (clause 5, 96/34/EU).

The detailed comparison between the two directives illuminates a shift to a greater emphasis on the importance of sharing parental responsibilities between the two parents in 2010. While EC 96 directive reads (emphasis added):

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[63] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/NIM/?uri=CELEX:31992L0085&qid=1564601512565

[64] As of 2019, Poland offers 52 weeks.

[65] The full name is COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 96/34/EC of 3 June 1996 on the framework agreement on parental leave concluded by UNICE, CEEP and the ETUC.

[66] Council Directive 2010/18/EU of 8 March 2010 implementing the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by BUSINESSEUROPE, UEAPME, CEEP and ETUC and repealing Directive 96/34/EC.

7. Whereas family policy should be looked at in the context of demographic changes, the effects of the ageing population, closing the generation gap and *promoting women's participation in the labour force*;

8.*Whereas men should be encouraged to assume an equal share of family responsibilities, for example they should be encouraged to take parental leave by means such as awareness programmes*;

EC/2010 directive in its place says:

11. Whereas family policies should *contribute to the achievement of gender equality* and be looked at in the context of demographic changes, the effects of an ageing population, closing the generation gap, promoting women's participation in the labour force and *the sharing of care responsibilities between women and men*;

12. Whereas in many Member States *encouraging men to assume an equal share of family responsibilities has not led to sufficient results; therefore, more effective measures should be taken to encourage a more equal sharing of family responsibilities between men and women*;

It further extends parental leave provision to 4 months, and makes one month non-transferrable and reserved for a father (but does not mandate it to be taken after the birth of the child):

The leave shall be granted for at least a period of four months and, to promote equal opportunities and equal treatment between men and women, should, in principle, be provided on a non-transferable basis. To encourage a more equal take-up of leave by both parents, at least one of the four months shall be provided on a non-transferable basis. The modalities of application of the non-transferable period shall be set down at national level through legislation and/or collective agreements taking into account existing leave arrangements in the Member States.

It can be seen that some attempts have been made to encourage father's participation in the care of their children during parental leave (directive 96/34/EU), no EU wide directive exists to mandate father's leave at the time of childbirth.[67] EC/2010 also shies away from this. Yet, by 2010, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria have

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[67] One is actively being debated by the European institutions at the time of this writing, which further suggests the increasing importance of gender equality as a value in itself.

already established father's leave, independent of the EU legislation. The CEE parental leave schemes also already exceed the required three months at that time. For example, parents have a right to parental leave of up to one year in Croatia and Lithuania, up to one and a half years in Latvia and up to two years in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, up to nine month in North Macedonia and up to four years in the Czech Republic (Robila 2012, 36). Therefore, at the time of accession, all post-communist member states had maternity and parental leave provisions that exceeded the requirements of the EU directives (Avdeyeva 2015). Some of the CEE member states have also established father's leave by 2010. This means that the EU impact on father's leave policies remains soft and indirect.

3.3. Leave policies in the post-communist period

Studies of existing family policy regimes in CEE countries remain far and few in between, with most studies representing comparative descriptive reports of policy content. A few studies that exist on the region in this policy area are case studies that detail policy regimes in the Baltic states (Aidukaite 2006) and Poland (Szelewa 2008), with other countries receiving significantly less attention, but featuring heavily in cross-country reports by the international non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations. For example, Robila (2012) provides a detailed description of leave schemes in CEE and the former Soviet Union. In addition, Jana Javornik (2014) presents one of the most comprehensive classifications and assessment of the CEE leave policies, using the de-familialization criterion discussed above.[68]

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[68] Nevertheless, Javornik (2014) does not include the criteria for paid care leave for the elderly, which is also the responsibility of women in most cases. Thus, some might argue that her classification is not complete.

In what follows, I draw on her classification of the CEE leave and family policy schemes to present them to the reader. I supplement it with my analysis of family policies for the cases of Bulgaria, North Macedonia, Croatia, and Romania not accounted for in her study. I use country reports to classify these countries, following Javornik's (2010, 246-247) classification. It is based on how much a state gives a choice to families when it comes to reconciliation of work and childcare. Ideally, a parent should be able to choose whether they want to stay at home with their children for about a year or use high quality public childcare facilities during this time as well as transform traditional gender roles into gender-neutral parents.

The Czech Republic, Romania in the 1990-s and Croatia are the cases of explicit familialism (Javornik 2014). Javornik's (2014) analysis classifies the Czech Republic as a case of explicit familialism because the state encourages childcare in the families and expects the families to provide it. The major policy tools are long paid parental leaves and limited provision of public childcare services, especially for children under 3. Romania in the 1990s can also be characterized as a case of explicit familialism due to its extension of parental leave (to one year in 1990 and to two years in 1997) that coincided with phasing out public childcare provision. In 2010, more incentives have been created for parents in Romania to be employed before the leave and remain integrated into the labor force. More incentives have also been provided to improve the quality of public childcare provision in 2007 (Rebeleanu et al. n.d.). This moves Romania closer to the category of implicit familialism because the supply of the public childcare service still remains low (EU Commission report 2009) but the need for those is recognized by the state, which attempts to integrate parents into the labor force.

Croatia also falls within the category of explicit familialism due to their lengthy parental leaves, no exclusive father's leave, and absence of childcare facilities for children under one year of age. Only limited state-provided childcare exists for children under 3 (Franicevic 2008, 84). I would classify North Macedonia in this category as well due to an expectation that care is provided by mothers. North Macedonia engages in a very limited provision of the public childcare services (5.6% enrollment for children under 3 in 2006). Most families rely on extended family to fulfill this function (Najchevska 2017). Further, Saraceno-Keck (2010) puts Bulgaria in the case of "supported familialism" (which is similar to the Javornik's explicit familialism) due to the relative lengthy leaves and limited provision of high quality public childcare. A European Commission report maintains that there is a significant shortage of places in childcare facilities both in large cities and small towns in Bulgaria (2009, 42).

Javornik (2014) further classifies Poland and Latvia as cases of implicit familialism. According to her, there is no explicit expectation "to promote traditional gender roles" via family policies, as is the case with explicit familialism, but "the lack of public support implicitly puts responsibility for childcare primarily within families" (252). According to Javornik (2014), Latvia's parental leave length is among the most efficient in maintaining female employment but Latvia does not provide much of public childcare, effectively limiting the choice of women who want to combine careers with having children, unless they are able to use private childcare options that are usually off limits for low-income families. A similar situation is observed in Poland.

Lithuania belongs to the case of supported de-familialism. "Parental leave generates incentives for mothers' continuous employment and a more active fatherhood

following childbirth, and leave and childcare services are contiguous" (Javornik 2014, 253). According to Javornik, though Lithuania comes close to the case of "optional de-familialism" ("equal distribution of childcare responsibilities between the state and the family and the father and the mother" and moving away from traditional gender roles), no country in the region approximates this ideal type yet (Javornik 2014, 253), with most of them implicitly or explicitly supporting familialism, in line with the traditionalist gender attitudes discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

Very few studies attempt to trace the family policy change in the region. Some studies report that while universal family benefits were slashed in almost every country in the region and public childcare provision was significantly reduced in almost every country, maternity and parental leaves remained intact at the time of transition (Lipsmeyer 2002). With time, universal family benefits and public care provisions have been restored in some of the countries experiencing low fertility rates, such as the Czech Republic, where a comprehensive Family Policy Law received a bi-partisan support in 2005 from the Social and Christian democrats (Potuček 2008).

As far as I could establish from the survey of the existing literature on the subject, no study, including Szelewa and Polakowski (2008), attempts to explore the driving mechanisms behind the adoption of father's leave, either qualitatively or quantitatively. However, the mechanisms driving the adoption of other symbolic gender policies can be argued to apply to father's leave and systematic tests of their explanatory power can be conducted. Given a long history of government intervention into the sphere of care through other leave policies as detailed above and explained in chapter 3, it is not a far reaching claim to suggest that governments will not be shy to legislate this area of human

relations, and political parties' position on father's leave should be behind the adoption of this policy, which constitutes the primary hypothesis for this chapter.

Hypothesis 3a: *Governments, in which parties campaigned on father's leave, are more likely to adopt father's leave policies.*

Also, due to a limited attention paid to father's leave in the electoral platforms, the chapter also extends the notion of mandate on this issue to include gender equality, thus testing whether parties who campaigned on gender equality are associated with the adoption of father's leave policies. It is possible to do so due to two factors. First, one of the themes that parties discuss in their manifestos concerns increasing gender equality in the family by increasing the participation of men in family life. Second, mandates can be conceived broadly and narrowly. In a narrow understanding of this term, a mandate means a specific promise that "points at a clear action that will be taken or goals that will be met if the party representatives are elected (Naurin 2011, 33). Terry Royed also calls such promises "potential pledges" (1996, 79). Yet, this narrow conception of a mandate can be extended to account not only for specific promises, which father's leave represents, but also for statements, in which parties express their support for a given policy position without using strong action verbs (Thomson 1999) or specifying a concrete policy measure. The Manifesto Project coding, for instance, is based precisely on this broad approach to mandates. Thus, my second hypothesis states:

Hypothesis 3b: *Governments, in which parties campaigned on gender equality issues, are more likely to adopt father's leave policies.*

To empirically test these hypotheses, I use the same dataset of 102 governments nested in eight EU post-communist democracies and candidate countries. The countries

are observed between 1991 and 2015, yielding 188 observations.[69] The countries include Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia,[70] Lithuania, North Macedonia, Latvia, Poland, and Romania. The choice of countries is determined by the availability of the original data on party promises on gender equality. Introduction explains this limitation and guiding motivation in detail.

4. Analysis

The countries in the sample, the time periods, and the independent variables behind policy adoption have been detailed in chapter 4. These variables include independent feminist movements, institutionalist factors of veto players and government types, share of female representatives, and EU membership. In addition to these variables, I include two other variables to the model that measure fertility rates and unemployment rates because they have been suggested in the qualitative literature to have an independent effect on the adoption of leave policies.

Low fertility rates are expected to increase the probability of leave adoption to assist parents in combining their work lives with childbirth (Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007, 22; Wolchik 1992). High unemployment rates (measured as a share of total population), on the contrary, are expected to decrease the need to activate the female participation in the labor force and reduce the probability of father's leave adoption due to pervasive labor market discrimination against women in the CEE (Fodor 2006; Rueschemeyer 2011). Both variables come from the *World Bank World Development Indicators*.

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[69] Due to some missing observations on some control variables, the actual number of observations is reduced to 137 in the analysis.

[70] Croatia enters the sample in 2003 after it became a democracy, according to Polity IV rankings (http://www.systemicpeace.org/polityproject.html).

The dependent variable in this case is the adoption of father's leave or its modification. To remind the reader, I define father's leave as a non-transferable leave that a father can take right after the birth of the child, which is different from the month-long paternity care leave 2010/18/EU directive recommends. In the CEE region, Poland first implemented 5 days of non-paid father's leave in 2008. It then extended it to one week of paid leave in 2010 and later extended it to two weeks in 2012. Figure 10 details the distribution of father's leave among countries and shows its duration.

Figure 10. Father's leave in CEE (in days)
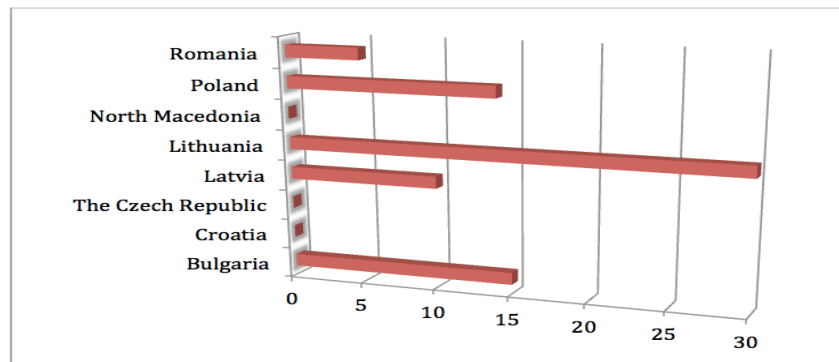
Source: Author's calculations.

To test hypotheses 3a and 3b, I employ a familiar event history model, which I estimate via MLE. I include time splines and clustered standard errors to correct for heteroscedasticity and time-dependence that arise in panel data. The functional form of this model is as follows:

$$\log (\lambda_i/1-\lambda_i) = \beta_0+\beta_1 x_{1i} +\beta_2 x_{2i}+ \dots \beta_k x_{ki} \quad (1)$$

Where x_1 is the key political variable of interest (government's position on gender equality and father's leave in each respective model) and x_2 through x_{ki} are control variables: namely, share of female representatives in the parliament, the strength of

feminist movements focused on gender equality, the strength of veto players, type of government, unemployment rate, EU membership, and fertility rates. Equation (1) specifies λ_i in terms of the log-odds ratios of the probability of an event occurrence to the probability of its non-occurrence. Table 5 below presents the analyses results.

5. Discussion of findings

Table 5. Determinants of father's leave adoption in CEE countries, 1991-2015

	b (rSE) (1)	b (rSE) (2)
Government's position on father's leave	1.989 (1.395)	—
Government position on gender equality	___	.721** (.257)
Feminist movements	-1.79*** (.532)	-1.73*** (.488)
Veto players	-18.37*** (5.122)	-19.6*** (6.04)
EU membership	1.88 (1.24)	2.72** (1.1)
Fertility	-5.54 (4.69)	.076 (.057)
Unemployment	-.34*** (.074)	-.352*** (.056)
Women in parliament (% seat share)	.613*** (.158)	.627*** (.16)
Type of government	1.06** (.555)	.879* (.493)
Spline 1	-.600* (.33)	-.68** (.339)
Spline 2	.299** (.113)	.387*** (.076)
Spline 3	-1.12*** (.206)	-1.49*** (.141)
Constant	5.968 (7.15)	8.1 (7.37)
N	137	137
PseudoR-sq	0.4001	0.3866
Entries are logit coefficients with cluster robust standard errors in parentheses.		

If one compares the results for the key variables of interest, namely a government's position on father's leave and a government's position on gender equality, presented in table 5, one would notice an ostensible discrepancy. In model one, the position of government on father's leave does not matter whereas the position of government on gender equality does. As a matter of fact, one standard deviation increase in the attention government parties pay to gender equality issues increases the probability of an adoption of a father's leave policy by .014, and this relationship is statistically significant.

The following conclusion can be drawn from this analysis. Parties are generally responsive to their voters when it comes to the adoption of father's leave because these leaves appear to be adopted by governments with strong commitment to gender equality. This finding speaks to parties fulfilling a broad mandate when it comes to father's leave. This is the case due to very few of them actually pledging father's leave in their electoral programs, which explains the absence of a statistically significant relation between government's position on father's leave and the subsequent adoption of the legislation in this issue area. Only 10% of governments in the sample include a party that has directly campaigned on father's leave issue; yet, a staggering 64% of governments include parties for whom gender equality is a salient issue.

Thus, my analysis along with the theoretical framework presented in chapter 3 suggests a new mechanism behind mandate fulfillment in new democracies when it comes to a symbolic gender issue (an issue that seeks to transform traditional gender

roles). Due to father's leave location in the semi-private sphere (a sphere that concerns reproduction and care and which has been subjected to government intervention in the past), it makes it easier to extend an existing mandate to promote gender equality to further advance a new issue, even though this issue seeks to transform gender roles. Thus, having parliamentary strong governments that support gender equality can be interpreted as giving parties a broad mandate for the execution of gender equality policies, and father' leave policy appears to be one of them, subject to institutional constraints, as the significant negative coefficients on the veto player variable in both models show.[71] A one standard deviation increase in the strength of the veto players index (.117) decreases the probability of father's leave adoption by 0.097, holding other variables at their observed values. The relationship is statistically significant.[72]

These findings are in line with the emerging literature on mandate responsiveness in new democracies. For example, Andrew Roberts (2010) observes similar trends in the realm of economic policies in the CEE countries, though his definition of policy responsiveness is different from my conception of broad mandates, as is his mechanism behind policy responsiveness. Roberts distinguishes between policy responsiveness and mandate responsiveness in the CEE. He understands mandates in the narrow sense of the term as a specific pledge to scale or expand economic reforms. Roberts then assesses whether governments that come into power promising "more reforms" deliver more reforms and those promising "less reforms" deliver less reforms. He finds that "campaign

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[71] Further calculations of the marginal effect of the type of government demonstrate the absence of the statistically significant effect of a one-unit or standard deviation increase in this variable.

[72] This analysis also supports *Manifesto Research Project's* approach to go beyond pledge counting and to focus on broader themes in their coding schemes of party positions and subsequent policies.

promises are not strongly associated with different reform trajectories" (83) and concludes only "weak mandate responsiveness" on the issue of economic reforms (2010, 86), if mandate responsiveness is understood as pledge fulfillment. In other words, no government has scaled back economic reforms even if it has promised to do so. Roberts links it with institutional constraints imposed on CEE governments by the *IMF* and the *World Bank*. At the same time, Roberts also finds that, in general, parties are responsive to their voters when it comes to economic reform policies, if responsiveness is understood as an alignment between public opinion and the ideology of the parties in government. In this, he follows the Policy Mood approach pioneered in the study of American Politics by MacKuen, Erikson, Stimson (2002).

In addition to political parties, female MPs appear to be the driver behind father's leave adoption in CEE. A 1% increase in the share of female parliamentarians increases the probability of father's leave adoption by .029, and the relationship is statistically significant. To recall from the previous chapter, female MPs also systematically affect the probability of affirmative action gender clause inclusion in the anti-discrimination legislation. Taken together, these findings provide some evidence that CEE female MPs "stand for" women's needs as a group (Celis 2008; Pitkin 1969) and advocate for women's interests, despite not having reached the "critical mass" status of 30 per cent (Staudt 1996, 38).

A closer reading of qualitative studies further sheds light on the role of female MPs in advocating for father's leave. With the exception of Bulgaria, where "women's committees [found] in almost every big party, had no impact on the policies" (Stoykova 2007, 85; also Kostova 1998) and female MPs have "actively distanced themselves from

women's and gender issues" (Ghodsee 2009, 176), female MPs in other countries have been active in advocating for women's interests of work-life reconciliation through father's leave. For example, early in transition in Romania female parliamentarians saw themselves as specialists on women's issues and wanted to address women's social and economic problems (Fischer 1998). Similarly, female parliamentarians worked across the isle in Poland to solve the problems women faced in early post-transition years (Siemieńska 2009) and introduce gender equality provision into the Constitution (Dobrowska 2007). As time passed, however, mostly left-wing female parliamentarians continued to participate in Parliamentary Group of Women in Poland.

In Lithuania, the QUING report does not explicitly state that it was female MPs that drove the adoption of father's leave policy, but notes that it "was initiated by the social-democrats in government, [namely,] the committee of Social and Economic affairs as an amendment to the Law on Maternity and Sickness to allow fathers of newborns a full paid month of paternal leave that it is non-transferable to mothers " (Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007, 54). However, to satisfy conservative policy makers, this leave has only been afforded to fathers married to the mothers of their children. Female parliamentarians have made numerous attempts to change it, but to no avail (ibid). Nevertheless, the history of this legislation adoption indirectly points out to the role of female parliamentarians since women are traditionally more represented on the committee on Social and Economic Affairs.

In Latvia, father's leave also "appears on the policy agenda as a result of the initiative of politicians themselves" (Putnina 2007, 16). It has been adopted in 2004. At the time, father's received only 70% of the amount mothers were entitled to. The

compensation was equalized in 2006. It appears to be driven as a part of a broader campaign by Latvian female MPs for broader gender equality. For example, they have been vocal against "informal rules on decision-making that exclude women" and sexist comments by the conservatives against the appointment of a female minister of defense as well as have engaged into a stronger push for national policy on gender equality (ibid).

Among other variables that have been found in the literature to independently affect symbolic gender policy outcomes, feminist movement variable continues to present some puzzling findings. My analysis shows that an increasing strength of feminist movements that seek to promote gender equality is associated with a lower probability of adoption of father's leave policies in both models. For instance, using the estimates from model two and holding other variables at their observed values, one unit increase in the strength of a feminist movement is associated with a decrease in the probability for father's leave policy adoption of .043, and the relationship is statistically significant.

I offer two tentative explanations for this finding based on my reading of the qualitative QUING reports and case-study scholarship on the region between 1995 -2009. These explanations, nevertheless, require further systematic tests. More up-to-date in-depth studies of the effects of the feminist NGOs on policy-making on the issue of leaves are also required to see if the trends are sustained and whether new trends have emerged since 2009.

The first explanation I offer concerns an uneasy relationship between feminist movements and politicians in CEE due to the absence of institutionalized channels for civic society engagement while developing public policy, especially in the Czech

Republic[73] and Lithuania (see more in chapter 4 where this pattern first emerges and is explained in detail).[74] This results in arbitrary, rather than consistent, invocation of the expertise from the feminist civil society actors. Even in the case of strong feminist movements trying to establish such channels on a more permanent basis, as in the case of Poland, such attempts have not been very successful. Though in 1990s Polish feminist NGOs worked with the Parliamentary Group of Women established in 1992 by participating in regular meetings, their influence on policy-making on most issues has remained rather limited. For example, feminist NGOs have not been invited for consultations on major pieces of legislation concerning gender equality, such as Act on Equal Treatment (2007) (Dabrowska 2007, 6-8).

Alternatively, policy-makers may choose to exclude feminist NGOs that they have previously consulted on gender equality issues when working on a different issue. For instance, in Croatia, feminist NGOs were not engaged by the policy makers on work-life reconciliation issues (Dedić 2007). I suggest that it may happen for two reasons.

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[73] As Röder (2007, 18) writes: Sometimes, NGOs are invited to comment on drafts of legislation (e.g. the first draft of the Anti-Discrimination Act); sometimes they are not (second draft of the Anti-Discrimination Act). There is no fixed procedure and it depends on the issue and the will of the partners involved. Furthermore, draft legislation can change drastically and very quickly in the legislative process and it is not always possible to find out why these changes occurred."

[74] Croatia appears to be an exception here, with governments actively seeking input on gender equality legislation in 1995-2007 (Dedić 2007, 5-8). For example, Dedić (ibid, 6) reports that "a Conference "Women in Croatia 2001-2005" [was organized in] October 2000, at which the representatives of the parliament, government, women's NGOs, political parties, trade unions and expert institutions adopted the conclusions on the goals of future activities, and set the guidelines of the new national policy and institutional mechanisms. On the basis of the conference's conclusions, the NGOs were included in the preparation of the National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2001-2005 through appointment of their representatives in ten working groups responsible for the following areas: education, economy, health, decision-making, institutional mechanisms, armed conflicts, environment, violence against women, media, and women's human rights. National Policy 2001-2005 was worked out jointly by the government representatives within the Commission for Gender Equality and women's NGOs associated with the Women's Network of Croatia." However, when it comes to work-life reconciliation issues, the government is unlikely to consult with NGOs, only social partners (Dedić 2007, 26).

policy makers may perceive of father's leave to be part of social or family policy rather than gender policy, and social policy is a familiar terrain for many of them.

Second, societal pressures on policy makers may subvert the advocacy work of the NGOs, as is the case of Latvia where feminist NGOs have been very active in lobbying in the field of gender equality and work-life reconciliation by participating in parliamentary work groups and have designed a number of policy-proposals. They managed to establish channels of communication with the government, which lacked gender equality expertise. Yet, all their efforts have crushed as a consequence of "no explicit demand for gender equality policies in society at large", perceived by policy-makers (Putnina 2007, 13).

Alternatively, I suggest that this finding may be explained through the issue fragmentation of feminist civil society groups working on gender equality (Stoykova 2007) as well as limited attention paid to father's leave and non-employment issues by the feminist NGOs across the countries in the region.

Among the issues related to non-employment, QUING researchers identify reconciliation of work and family life through flexible work arrangements, care work (primarily related to caring for disabled individuals, not parental leaves and childcare facilities), equal pay, access to the labor market, pensions, and family tax-benefit policies (Popa 2007; Stoykova 2007). Almost no attention has been paid to parental leave in general and father's leave in particular by the feminist organizations as part of their advocacy efforts in many countries in the region. There are disagreements among feminist organizations of what the best leave policies are (Dabrowska 2007, 28; Putnina

2007, 24) similar to the one discussed earlier in the section on normative underpinnings of parental leave in this chapter.

CEE feminist civil society groups understand gender equality both as non-discrimination and equal opportunities and as reconciliation of work and family life. For instance in Bulgaria, a big part of feminist NGO's work focuses on the promotion of economic empowerment of women rather than on parental leave and deeper engagement of father's in children's care. Namely, they primarily advocate for programs that will assist women in retraining and entrepreneurial skills. They also fight for equal pay and non-discrimination (Stoykova 2007). For Polish NGOs, the key issue in work-life reconciliation policies has been the critical assessment of Social Security reform and exposure of labor market discrimination that women experience (Dabrowska 2007, 93). Similar issue fragmentation has been observed in Latvia, with primary non-employment issues concerning childcare, work-life balance, and gender pay gap (Putnina 2007, 80). In Croatia, while NGOs working on gender equality have been rather active in policy-making process concerning gender equality and non-discrimination, they "paid the least attention precisely to non-employment issues" (Dedić 2007, 26). This includes father's leave that has not yet been adopted in Croatia. In addition to this inattention to father's leave issue and the barriers from governments, feminist organizations working on gender equality have been rather weak and relatively apolitical when it comes to non-employment issues in general in Romania, the Czech Republic, and Lithuania (Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007, 9; Popa 2007; Röder 2007, 6-7).

All in all, this means that an increased strength of feminist organizations working on gender equality in the region does not reflect the increased efforts to advocate neither

for gender role reversal in the family nor for father's leave. Unwillingness of CEE governments to engage feminist NGOs on non-employment issues further exacerbates this trend. Thus, the negative association between an increased strength of feminist movements and decreased probability of father's leave adoption appears to reflect these processes. Namely, it reflects stronger advocacy efforts by feminist movements on other issues related to the work-life and gender equality balance, which takes away resources from promoting gender equality in the family through greater equalizing of gender roles in child care.[75]

Further, fertility rates that have been named time after time in qualitative studies as the driving reason behind leave expansion in CEE do not prove to matter in systematic analysis. In addition, high unemployment rates, measured as percentage of the labor force, are inversely associated with the probability of father's leave adoption. A 1% increase in the unemployment rate decreases the probability of a father's adoption by .013 (p=.000 & holding other variables at their observed values). This finding indirectly supports the idea that leave expansion in CEE is a form of a response to the unemployment problem for women but not for men who are needed in the labor market.[76]

Lastly, the probability of an adoption of father's leave policy increases the closer a country gets to EU membership, in line with the literature on policy innovation stemming from international organizations. A change from a non-candidate to a candidate status and subsequently to a member status is associated with a .188 increase in the probability of the adoption of a father's leave policy, regardless of a party's position or the strength of

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[75] Though no QUING report exists for North Macedonia, other observers report issue fragmentation among Macedonian feminist NGOs as well (Bagic 2002, 18).

[76] QUING reports referenced above suggest this.

the institutional players in the system, and the relationship is statistically significant. This finding taken together with the significance of government's position on gender equality illustrates Keck and Sikkin's (1999) observation that international norms align better if contextually they can fit with the existing norms. It also may be interpreted as systematic evidence in support of the impact of "soft" norms on domestic politics.

6. Conclusion

The chapter argues and demonstrates empirically that when it comes to more innovative symbolic gender policies that seek to transform gender roles in the semi-private sphere, both formal domestic political actors (parties and female MPs) and international organizations matter in CEE whereas the feminist movements do not. In fact, stronger feminist movements appear to reduce the probability of father's leave adoption, which I link to the fragmentation of issues that feminist movements working on gender equality focus on and arbitrary engagement of civil society actors in policy-making by CEE governments, which remains issue-specific and under-institutionalized.

The results in this chapter also deepen our understanding of mandate responsiveness on gender issues in post-communist democracies by showing that parties interpret their mandates widely and do not shy away from transferring it into a neighboring policy area, even if they choose not to directly include specific promises into their programs, as the results in model two versus model one suggest. Given that father's leave is located in the semi-private sphere assists in such mandate expansion.

The finding of mandate non-responsiveness (narrowly defined) specifically on father's leave issue (model 1) can be further interpreted through the institutional barriers

that one party in the government with this specific mandate is unable cross, and the significance of veto players for policy change further substantiates this explanation.

Also, one needs to note that the Czech Republic passed father's leave policy in 2018, which is beyond the scope of the observation in this study.[77] As time goes by, one can expect to see further activation of father's leave issue, and thus continued monitoring of the manifestos is in order to see if parties receive mandates in the narrow sense of this word and subsequently act on them; especially, as policy making in this area continues at the EU level.

In 2019, the European institutions have adopted a mandatory paid ten-day leave for the second parent to account for the same-sex couples (Barbière 2019), but the European Commission proposal for non-transferrable portions of parental leave reserved exclusively for fathers has failed (Janta 2018). Time will tell what the implications are, if any, for family policy models and gender relations in the CEE. Whether CEE men take the leave afforded to them also remains an empirical question to investigate in future studies.

I, however, now turn to the discussion of domestic violence – the least developed area of the EU hard law and the most intrusive in the intimate relations. It requires fundamental reframing of gender relations and the role of the state in the protection of women. It also invites competing framings of the issue and activates civil society groups beyond feminist movements. This is also an issue area with the strongest presence of

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[77] I do not expect this to change my results. I simply note that there have been further developments in this policy area. Further robustness tests with a larger sample are always welcome but are beyond the scope of this dissertation.

feminist movements that focus specifically on domestic violence; therefore, it is has been subject to the strongest advocacy efforts.

At the same time, as chapter 3 has described, this is an issue area where the state is expected to be the most reluctant to go. Chapter 2 has already shown that domestic violence remains a new electoral issue for CEE, if parties even decide to engage with it. Chapter 2 has shown that not many CEE parties feature this issue in their electoral campaigns. Yet, numerous policies have been adopted to protect women against domestic violence in the region. So what actors drive the adoption of government policies on this issue? I now turn to the investigation of this puzzle.

Government (non)-responsiveness in the intimate sphere:
Protection against domestic violence

1. Introduction

Though fluidity is the key characteristic of intimate human relations, some social roles may be less open for negotiation for some women (Duncan 2000). For example, some women learn during socialization that part of their social role is to please their male partner. Some may also learn that they are responsible for what is going on in their intimate relations, including for physical and emotional mistreatment (Fábián 2010, 1). Some cultural stereotypes reinforce these behaviors with old maxima like, "He hits me, it means he loves me" (Бьет – значит любит, in Russian, or in archaic Romanian: "Daca nu te bate, nu te iubeste").

Today many women in the CEE region remain unaware of what constitutes abuse or domestic violence, i.e., they disregard belittling and assume responsibility for physical and sexual partner violence (FRA 2014, 159). The problem of domestic violence[78] lies within the most intimate sphere of human relations, which is highly fluid. Any liberal government, with the exception of a totalitarian one, is traditionally reluctant to regulate intimacy and no history of government action in this sphere exists. Thus, I expect government responsiveness on this issue to be limited, if not non-existent, as the

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[78] Violence against women is a broad concept that encompasses trafficking, sexual harassment, domestic/intimate partner violence, and female genital mutilation among others (Weldon 2002). At the international level the issue of violence against women is articulated as a comprehensive policy category. When it comes to translation into national policies, however, governments may cherry pick and pay closer attention to one sub-issue over others. For instance, the European Union nations have been working closely on eradication of genital mutilation and trafficking but European governments have taken a longer time to recognize the extent of domestic violence problem in their respective nations. (Montoya 2013). This is why the current study focuses just on one subcategory of the violence against women, namely domestic violence.

theoretical framework in Chapter 3 predicts. Any government action[79] in this policy domain is likely to be a result of the international norm translation, given the emerging international norm on protection of women against violence, and feminist movements pressuring the governments for change (Htun and Weldon 2012; also QUING project 2007).

These challenges of addressing intimate partner violence in party politics and government policies in the CEE region are further complicated by three factors. First, under communism, domestic violence has not been recognized as a problem (Fábián 2010). This means an absence of a history of any government action, which precludes the movement of the issue into semi-private sphere, in contrast to extensive welfare state policies that have regulated reproduction, contributing to the growing acceptance of a state presence in the family unit.

Second, after transition, many CEE countries tried to distance themselves from their totalitarian past, making it harder to justify the regulation of the intimate relations between two consenting adults. In other words, the history of totalitarianism and post-totalitarianism and its destruction of intimate human relations led to the heightened

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[79] I define government action as a law, an amendment, or national strategy adopted in a given time period.[79] It includes legislation pieces, national strategies, frameworks, and action plans adopted by the legislature but excludes any implementation measures that are usually devised as a result of the adoption of these policies. It is measured dichotomously. My choice is motivated by the idea that different state actors may be behind policy development and policy implementation, although most analysts combine them under one measure because they are interested in the scope of government action rather than the action itself (Avdeyeva 2010; Htun and Weldon 2018; Weldon 2002).

Also, it is harder to consistently measure annual implementation in this issue area due to the absence of disaggregated government budgetary data on the issue and due to the fact that in many countries implementation is done by the NGOs through state-civil society partnerships.[79] What this means is that a government may be reporting a one-time implementation of a policy, such as police training, which is counted in the scope of government action measure but the extent and regularity of such commitment are hard to observe and count.

guardianship of the intimate space (so called, "romantization of the private") reinforced by a comprehensive welfare state retrenchment (Brunell and Johnson 2010; Einhorn 2006; Hagemann-White 2000, 192).

The final complicating factor stems from the slow and late development of international norms on violence against women coupled with ongoing discursive battles over whether women's rights are human rights at the international and regional level. There are four reasons behind this phenomenon. First, human rights discourse is itself less universal (see Callaway and Harrelson-Stephens 2007, 109-140). Second, human rights treaties are relatively weak international instruments (Avdeyeva 2010; Zwingel 2016). Finally, when it comes to domestic violence specifically, the location of the issue in the intimate space between two private individuals further complicates the matter since the idea of human rights has originally been created to protect an individual from state assault on human dignity, not from another individual, unless this individual acts in government capacity (Libal and Parekh, 2009).

Thus, the key argument this chapter makes is that government action on domestic violence faces many barriers due to the issue location in the intimate space of human relations exacerbated by the history of intimacy destroying by the totalitarian and post-totalitarian regimes in the CEE as well as the lack of definitive resolution of the intimate-public divide in the international (UN legal instruments remain at the level of frameworks) and subnational law (the EU has no domestic violence directive in place) until the regional Istanbul Convention (2011).[80]

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[80] The full name of the Istanbul Convention is Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

The chapter seeks to answer two questions: 1) How is the norm translated into domestic politics? and 2) Which actors are behind policies in this domain? Two answer the first question, I first trace issue articulation and its reflection in EU and CEE national politics, paying particular attention to party positions on the issue to fill the gap in the literature that overlooks parties in this process and emphasizes the role of NGOs (feminist movements) and the European Union (Brunell and Johnson 2010; Htun and Weldon 2018; Montoya 2010; Krizsan and Popa 2010). I hypothesize that as an international norm on the issue gets stronger, it will become more politicized in national politics. To this end, I have extended the period under observation till 2019 to meaningfully assess the effects of the Istanbul Convention (2011) on CEE party politics.

In other words, as the first regional legal instrument that has resolved the tension between the intimate and the public along the lines of the protection of women, has advocated for changing the gendered way intimate partners interact with one another (i.e., replacing acts of aggression as predominant mode of intimate partner conflict resolution with deliberation) and has attached monitoring mechanisms to state's obligations, the Istanbul Convention (2011) has galvanized the doormat cleavage in national politics and has forced the parties to take a position on how much the state can regulate the intimate.

To answer the second question, I employ statistical analysis to test the systematic impact of parties and social movements on the adoption of domestic violence policies in the region. Given the overwhelming consensus in the literature on the role of feminist NGOs as the main norm translators of this norm (Brunell and Johnson 2006; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Krizsan and Popa 2010; Montoya 2010) and the issue location in the intimate, which complicates government action, I hypothesize that the effect of

government parties that align with domestic violence issue on government policy response in this domain is mediated by the capacity of the feminist movements to move the issue into the public space.

The chapter is organized as follows. Section two traces the history of issue articulation at the international, subnational, regional, and party level and matches it to the adopted legislative actions. It follows a chronological order and seeks to explicitly trace any domestic developments in response to international developments, as recorded in party manifestos and policies. Though critical frame analysis (Verloo 2005) is not a primary goal of this section, it discusses the major themes related to domestic violence that have appeared in party platforms in eight post-communist democracies over thirty years. It shows that the Istanbul Convention (2011), indeed, has brought domestic violence front and center into many party platforms across CEE. This includes the countries, in which the parties have remained silent on the issue since transition: namely, Latvia, Poland, Bulgaria. Section three moves to the discussion of the difference between the second-wave western feminist movements and top-down-bottom-up CEE feminist movements strategies and offers the mechanisms behind issue articulation and advocacy by the feminist movements to explain interplay between parties and movements on the issue. Section four presents the analytic strategy to test the systematic effect of parties and movements on government action in this issue area and briefly explains other independent variables not discussed in previous chapters. Section five presents the results of the analysis. The conclusion follows.

2. Issue articulation and norm translation

This section traces the history of issue articulation at the international, subnational, regional, and party level and matches it to the adopted legislative actions. The UN is the key international actor, the EU is the key subnational actor, and the Council of Europe is the key regional actor in this process. The section follows a chronological order and seeks to explicitly trace any domestic developments in response to international developments, as recorded in party manifestos and policies. Though critical frame analysis (Verloo 2005) is not a primary goal of this section, it discusses the major themes related to domestic violence that have appeared in party platforms in eight post-communist democracies over thirty years.

2.1. Beijing: Before and after (1945-1997)

Though the UN Commission on the Status of Women has been in existence since 1946, gender violence has not been immediately included among the issues it addressed. Violence against women has been decoupled from the gender equality promotion, and has not received much recognition in the international arena until 1980s (Karns and Mingst 2010, 488; Keck and Sikkink 1998; Montoya 2013, 108; Zwingel 2016).

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, or CEDAW, (1979; entered into force in 1981 (Karns and Mingst 2010, 117), and its Optional protocol (1999) is the major international Convention that protects the rights of women and urges states to work diligently to eliminate gender discrimination and foster gender equality (Zwingel 2016). The Convention, however, remains silent on the issue of violence against women, though in its monitoring, the Commission has

started to include questions on government responses to violence against women questions since 1992 based on its general recommendation 19 (www.un.org).

The issue of violence against women has been articulated and placed on the agenda of international organizations by the second wave feminist movements that have advocated for the recognition of women's rights as human rights (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Weldon 2002; Montoya 2013; Karns and Mingst 2010, 488). The key landmark is the Nairobi World Conference on Women (1985), where violence against women has been recognized as a separate issue affecting the wellbeing of women and nations and a set of policies to combat violence against women have been recommended (Pietilä 1998).

In 1993, the United Nations General Assembly issues a Declaration On the Elimination of Violence Against Women (resolution 48/104 of 20 December 1993),[81] originating from the 1993 UN World Human Rights Conference in Vienna. This Resolution "is a result of the ninety or so human rights and women's NGOs that organized the Global Campaign for Women's Human Rights" (Karns and Minsgt 2010, 489). Thus, as shown below, the content of this norm is explicitly feminist.

Resolution 48/104 frames violence as a result of "historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men" (Resolution 48/104). Article 1 further defines "violence against women" as "any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or

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[81] www.un.org

suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life" (ibid). It goes on to recommend measures to improve the situation for women. It proscribes states from invoking cultural practices and traditions to justify violence against women (ibid) and calls for the special rapporteur on violence against women (Joachim 2007). This resolution is non-biding per articles 10 and 12 of the UN Charter that describe the powers of the General Assembly (www.un.org). Nevertheless, it helps to articulate the issue and to create the direction for further norm development.

Next comes the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (now Beijing +25). To date, it is the most comprehensive international framework to address violence against women (among other issues). It continues to frame violence against women as a human rights violation (Platform for Action, par. 112). This Framework reiterates many ideas from the Declaration (1993). Namely, it defines violence against women and brings specific examples of such acts of violence (par 113), it rearticulates the feminist framing that violence against women is a result of unequal power relations (par. 118) and points to the existence of violence "in the family or within the home, where violence is often tolerated" (par. 117). It proceeds with delineating government action that needs to be taken to eliminate this problem. The Commission on the Status of Women is charged with monitoring the adoption of the Framework (Karns and Mingst 2010, 117).[82]

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[82] Later, in 2010, the General Assembly creates the U.N. Women – a special office responsible for Gender Equality Promotion and Female Empowerment. It brings together the Division for the Advancement of Women, International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, and United Nations Development Fund for Women (UN Women).

To sum up, although much work has been done at the international level to articulate the issue of violence against women and to frame it through a feminist lens, as well as to encourage states to address the problem, no legally-binding document exists at the international level at the time of writing and no enforcement mechanisms are available, other than monitoring reports and recommendations (Pabijanek 2013), which have been "notoriously underfunded and politicized until 2006, when the Human Rights Council and its Universal Periodic Review has been created," but it remains underfunded as well (Karns and Mingst 2010, 460-461).

The European Union (since 1993, before that - the European Community) is both a norm recipient, translator, and developer, with hard law available at its disposal for norm enforcement. Unlike other policy areas that concern women's rights and gender equality, the European Union does not have a comprehensive domestic violence directive, which means that its effect on the legislation and policies of the member states on this issue is limited and operates through "soft norm" dissemination (Krizsan and Popa 2010). Over the years, there have been tensions on how to best frame and address violence against women issue at the European level, despite the Union's strong commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

Celeste Montoya (2013) identifies four time periods and approaches to issue articulation at the European level that has been affected by the different positions of the Commission, the Parliament, and the Council of the European Union, which originally has provided "the weakest institutional support for addressing violence against women" due to its reluctance to "surrender sovereignty in social affairs" (Montoya 2013, 106,

110). The Parliament has been the strongest advocate and relied on the international framework the most (Montoya 2013, 113).

In mid 1980s, the European Parliament passes the 1986 Resolution on Violence against Women and frames it as a human rights violation, in line with the international norm development on the issue. This resolution recognizes different forms violence against women takes, as well as details strategies to combat it with the focus on policy reform, victim services, and public awareness raising (Montoya 2013, 108, 120, 132).

In the 1990s, the Parliament passes the 1997 Resolution on the Need to Establish a European Union Wide Campaign for Zero Tolerance of Violence against Women. As its 1986 predecessor, it suggests policy reform, victim services and awareness raising campaigns as well as adds the call for greater support for NGOs who work on the issue and the need for research. The primary goal of the resolution is to establish a European zero-tolerance campaign (Montoya 2013, 133).

As a consequence, the Commission starts the Daphne initiative (institutionalized in 2000) with a focus on domestic violence and sexual assaults and STOP initiative with a focus on human trafficking (Montoya 2013, 110). It requests the member states "to collect data, conduct public awareness campaigns, work on protection and prevention, and work with NGOs" (Montoya 2013, 133). These resolutions are non-biding but they help to strengthen the transnational networks of NGOs that work on the issue (Montoya 2010).

CEE nations at the time are struggling with democratic transitions, deep economic crises, and structural reforms. Civil war is fought in Croatia. Though "a return to Europe" has been on the agenda of most CEE countries, it does not begin until 1998, after the EU

has agreed to begin the process of admission for the EU at the Luxemburg Council in December 1997.[83] Given that the EU commitment to fight domestic violence has been in its incipient stage at the time, it is likely that any references to domestic violence in party platforms and subsequent policies are a reflection of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Only three CEE parties at the time (two left parties and one liberal party) have addressed the issue in their platform during this time period. The proposals are brief and concern legislative action and victim services. Feminist frames are absent in these statements. None of these parties have become a member of a governing coalition.

Thus, in 1992, *Centre Movement of Lithuania*, a liberal political party, pledges to pass "laws to protect women and children from domestic violence" (*CML* 1992). In Romania, in 1996 *Party of Social Democracy of Romania* espouses to "promote the necessary legislation to ensure the sanctioning of violence and abuse against women and children in family and society" as well as services, such as "social assistance centers for women victims of domestic violence in Bucharest as well as other counties with high rates of these criminal activities" (*PSDR* 1996), but the issue disappears from the party platforms in later periods under observation. Also, in 1996, *the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia* in the Czech Republic pledges "support services for women and families (counseling, help in urgent situations, women's shelters, etc.), without explicitly mentioning any legislation.

At the same time, in the absence of any mentions of domestic violence in party platforms, but likely as a result of the Beijing Platform for Action, Bulgaria introduces the Law on the Ministry of Interior that addresses domestic violence in 1997 (Montoya

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[83] https://www.europarl.europa.eu/summits/lux1_en.htm

2010, 337), the Croatian government includes the provision in the Family law "that prohibits violent behavior" (ibid, 338), and Poland recognizes domestic violence as a crime in their Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure (ibid, 343).

2.2. First and second accession waves (1998-2006)

As noted earlier, no international instrument on the protection against domestic violence has appeared since Beijing. Meanwhile, the norm continues its development at the EU level. This process remains contentious. By the end of the 1990s, the framing shifts away from human rights and gender equality and toward framing violence against women as a public health issue. In 2000, the Parliament and the Commission adopt a number of recommendations on the issue (Montoya 2013). In the third period, between 2000 and 2006, the Council conclusions (2002) dedicate more effort to strengthen Daphne and collect the data as well as attempts to engage the EU in the monitoring role (Montoya 2013, 133). In 2006, the Parliament calls for action and offers suggestions for policy reform as well as requests the Commission to include violence against women in the monitoring of the candidate countries (Montoya 2013, 134).

In spite of these developments, at the time of accession, no hard law on domestic violence exists. This means that no transposition has been required on the issue. Not much monitoring has occurred, either, especially for the countries that accede in 2004 and 2007, which are most countries in the sample (Avdeyeva 2015; Montoya 2013). This results in unequal protection of women against violence by the varying legislation of member states and limited efforts to prevent it at the EU level (EU Parliament, 2019). Yet, it is at this time when most national laws have been passed to protect women from domestic violence in CEE. Many experts link it to the influence of the European soft

norms and a signaling game CEE countries have played with the EU (Avdeyeva 2010; Krizsan and Popa 2010). Others consider this period "a window of missed opportunity" (Montoya 2013, 160).

My analysis of the party platforms, however, suggests that in some CEE countries these norms have been translated into laws through electoral politics, as most parties that have included statements on domestic violence into their platforms later become members of the governing coalitions. Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, and Latvia are exceptions.[84] Latvia does not adopt any legislation to protect domestic violence victims whereas Bulgaria, Poland, and Romania pass such laws but no party have included this issue in their manifesto.[85]

In the Czech Republic, in addition to service provision theme that has already emerged in the previous time period, parties begin discussing the need for legislation and criminalization of domestic violence. Some of them have relied on feminist frames of the issue. For instance, in 1998, *the Social Democratic Party* urges de-privatization of the problem and criminalization of domestic violence: "Steady increase in the number of instances of domestic violence leads us to the need to adopt penalties under the criminal law that meet European standards. The problem of domestic violence should become open, should be considered the problem of the whole society, not only the problem of the

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[84] Croatia also adopts a Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in 2003 (Montoya 2010, 337- 338) but I do not consider it an exception since violence against women has been part of the political discourse in Croatia in the 1990s. I do not have the data on this time period due to Croatia being authoritarian at the time.

[85] In 2005, Bulgaria passes and subsequently amends (2009) the Act on Protection Against Domestic Violence, Poland passes the law on domestic violence in 2005, and Romania does so in 2003 (Law on Preventing and Combating Family Violence) and 2004 (Law on Protection of Victims) (Montoya 2010, 337-338, 343-344).

"private sphere" (*SDP* 1998). It appears that as a result, domestic violence is criminalized in 2004 and the Expulsion of Perpetrator Act is adopted in 2006 (Montoya 2010, 339). In 2006, the *Greens* commit to advocating "the abolition of the possibility of excluding a relative from criminal proceedings in cases of domestic violence" as well as promise to enforce the amendments to the Criminal Code on domestic violence passed in 2004, which "will lead to easier and more efficient separation of victims from domestic violence as well as provide services for perpetrators" (*SZ* 2006).

In Lithuania, in 2000, *New Union of Social Liberals*, a liberal party, promises to "undertake measures to eliminate domestic and sexual violence against women and children" (*NS* 2000). Lithuania subsequently adopts a Strategy for the Reduction of Domestic Violence against Women in 2007 and sanctions the removal of the perpetrator from the joint residence in 2004 by amending its Criminal Code (Montoya 2010, 341).

Though North Macedonia becomes an EU candidate state only in 2005, I also include it in this sub-section to maintain the chronological order. North Macedonia appears to have been influenced both by the Beijing and EU soft law. Political parties in North Macedonia have been vocal about domestic violence as early as 1998 when *the Social-Democratic League of Macedonia* mentions domestic violence and the need to address it but do not provide any specificities, and the *Liberal Democratic party* proposes to make legislative changes for domestic violence and services to victims, such as centers and psychological counseling. *The Party of Democratic Prosperity* in the same election cycle promises to advocate for women's security in the family and to open centers for family violence victims. Only *the Party of Democratic Prosperity* enters into a governing coalition in 2001.

No government action on domestic violence has appeared in Macedonia until 2004, when domestic violence is recognized as a crime. This coincides with *The Social-Democratic League of Macedonia*, who has committed itself to the elimination of abuse against women in 2002 electoral cycle, leading the government coalition in 2002-2006. A junior partner in this coalition, *The Liberal Democratic Party* has promised to offer shelters for women and children, victims of domestic violence in their 2002 electoral platform.

2.3. Post-accession and third wave candidate countries (2007-2011)

At the EU level, the Parliament passes a resolution and the Commission passes Guidelines for addressing violence against women in non-member states in 2008 (Montoya 2013, 111). During this time period, the parliament calls for binding directives, another EU awareness raising campaign, and a conference to explore policies on violence against women (Montoya 2013, 134). Finally, starting in 2009 and 2010, the Council begins supporting the "EU activism in combating violence against women" in its 2010 Council Conclusions on eradicating Violence against women (Montoya 2013, 112), but the European Commission remains reluctant to work on a comprehensive EU policy, as of the time of writing (European Parliament 2019). Over the years, the EU government bodies have framed violence against women as a gender equality issue, as a human rights issue, as a non-feminist criminal, economic, or public health issue (Montoya 2013).

This uneven support for violence against women as a policy issue, the aggregation of all forms of violence together coupled with contested frames as well as unavailability of hard law and a clear course of policy action that had to be undertaken have also

reflected in how much the EU agenda could have an impact on the domestic party and government agendas of the CEE nations, as the preceding sections show.

This also means that post-communist member states have been monitored differently on this issue based on the time of accession, with countries in the first (1998-2003) and second waves (1998-2006) receiving very limited monitoring on the issue from the EU due to "gender violence … not [being] a part of the *acquis* related negotiations" and countries in the third wave, Croatia and North Macedonia, receiving more scrutiny in 2006-2012 (Montoya 2013, 166). If violence against women has been featured in first and second wave accession reports at all, it is in the form of human trafficking rather than domestic violence (Montoya 2013, 166). It has only been discussed in a report on Poland in 2003 when the conservative government canceled a UN sponsored program to address spousal violence, and on Romania (Montoya 2013, 160; also Krizsan and Popa 2010). In contrast, reports from the third accession wave "address the issue of domestic violence" specifically and extensively (Montoya 2013, 167), but the focus remains on human trafficking as a border control issue and sexual harassment (which is part of the EU gender equality directive –V.B.) (Montoya 2013, 156).

During this time period, domestic violence disappears from the CEE party agendas in all new member states but the Czech Republic. This is in line with the predictions of the feminist scholars that link issue development in the CEE with EU accession. Policies adopted on domestic violence in this time period defy this explanation. For example, Bulgaria adopts an amendment to its domestic violence law in 2009. For the first time in 18 years, Latvia introduces a government program to combat domestic violence (equivalent to action plans in other countries) in 2008. Lithuania

passes a National Action Plan to Combat Violence against Women in 2007 followed by a comprehensive legislation on protection against domestic violence in 2011. Poland also introduces a series of amendments to domestic violence legislation in 2008-2010. [86]

During this time period in the Czech Republic, the *Greens* continue developing the issue by proposing to add stalking to the list of criminal offenses in 2006 as well as to adopt "a comprehensive set of measures aimed at the educational, social and legislative areas" in 2010 (*SZ* 2006, 2010).[87] The *Greens* are a junior member of the governing coalition in 2007-2009. The Czech Republic passes a few amendments, including criminalization of stalking, promised by the Greens, in 2007-2008 and adopts a National Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence in 2011.

Contrary to the first and second wave countries, North Macedonia and Croatia remain candidate states. The issue of domestic violence remains on the party agenda in these countries, although most party positions take the form of general statements rather than specific pledges on the issue. In Croatia, *Croatian Democratic Union,* a major center-right liberal-conservative party, introduces the issue in 2007. It leads the government coalition in 2008-2011. The party frames domestic violence as harm to family by making a general statement to pay "particular attention to protecting children and families by … preventing violence against children and women" (*HDZ* 2007). In the same electoral cycle, *the Coalition of the Croatian Peasant Party, the Croatian Social-*

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[86] All the information about the legislative measures during this time period comes from the UN Women Database.

[87] In 2010, *the Greens* also acknowledge in their platform that they "significantly contributed to the elaboration of the National Action Plan on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and [are] committed to its adoption and fulfillment" (*SZ* 2010, 64).

liberal Party and the Primorian-Goranski Union promises to prevent "all kinds of violence against women" (HSS 2007). Subsequently, Croatia adopts a National Strategy to Combat Domestic Violence in 2007 and passes a law on free legal aid to victims of domestic violence in 2008. *Croatia is Growing*, a center-left electoral coalition, which promises to "prevent and stop violence against women" carries this issue over in 2011 electoral cycle (Manifesto 2011).

In North Macedonia, the parties continue to expand the thematic content of the issue. In 2008, the *Social-Democratic League of Macedonia* promises to adopt legislation to fight domestic violence and open shelters. In 2011, in addition to their earlier commitments, they also pledge to raise awareness and work with perpetrators. The party has not been a member of a governing coalition. Nevertheless, an amendment to the national gender equality strategy (2007) that clarifies the definition of domestic violence is adopted and the law on free legal aid is passed in 2010.

In 2011, *IMRO-VDE,* the largest party in the government coalition in 2011-2015*,* promises special measures to stimulate employment of domestic violence victims, support NGOs in their service provision for the victims of domestic violence as well as to provide counseling serviced for domestic violence victims. As a likely result, the law on combating domestic violence has been adopted in 2014 (unwomen.org 2014). Equally likely, this can be a result of the development of a new regional norm that singles out domestic violence as a policy issue, the Istanbul Convention (2011), though North Macedonia has not ratified it until 2018.

2.4. Regional norm on domestic violence: the Istanbul Convention (2011)

The first legally binding instrument on domestic violence has originated within a regional organization whose specific focus is human rights. On May 11, 2011, the Council of Europe[88] has opened the Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (the Istanbul Convention) for signatures. The Convention has entered into force on August 1, 2014, when the tenth country, Andorra, has ratified it.[89]

All CEE countries have signed the Convention, but only a few have ratified it at the time of writing. Among those who have done so are Poland (2015), Romania (2016), North Macedonia (2018) and Croatia (2018).[90] Because it is a relatively new instrument that has not been widely discussed or assessed in the literature and because it has a potential to affect party politics in the CEE countries, as I detail in the introduction, I briefly summarize the text of this Convention below.

Article 1 of the Convention states its purposes "to protect women from all forms of violence, and prevent, prosecute, and eliminate violence against women and domestic violence" (2). The emphasis is placed on all forms of violence and domestic violence is singled out as a separate form of violence (art. 2). Article 3 frames violence against women both as a human rights violation and "a form of discrimination". It notes that gender-based violence occurs both in public and private life.

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[88] In 2006-2008, the Council of Europe also ran a Campaign to combat violence against women, including domestic violence (https://www.coe.int/t/dg2/equality/domesticviolencecampaign/default_en.asp?)

[89] https://www.coe.int/en/web/istanbul-convention/cahvio

[90] https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/210/signatures

A separate definition is given to domestic violence as "acts of physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occur within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners, whether or not the perpetrator shares or has shared the same residence with the victim" (3b). Further, "Gender" shall mean the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men" (3c).[91] "Gender-based violence" is defined as affecting women because they are women or "disproportionally" (3d). Article 4 calls for legislative action "to live free from violence in both the public and the private sphere" (p. 3). Article 5 calls for state authorities, institutions, and officials to refrain "from engaging in any act of violence" (4).

Among specific policies, Chapter II urges the state parties to allocate resources to the policy implementation and create official monitoring bodies who will also perform research and data collection tasks. Chapter III details prevention, which includes awareness-raising on a regular basis of "different manifestations" of gender based violence (article 13), education (article 14), including non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relations (this clause constitutes a significant development since Beijing-V.B.), training of professional (article 15), preventive intervention and treatment programs (article 16), encouragement of the private sector, including the media to self-regulate to prevent violence against women and "enhance respect for their dignity" (p. 6).

Chapter IV explicitly focuses on the protection of victims "from any further acts of violence" (article 18.1) and "aim[s] at avoiding secondary victimization" (a18.3) as

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[91] This article of social construction of gender is one of the most controversial for many political parties in the CEE.

well as provision of services and information about these services (articles 18.5 and 18.6). Article 20 lists specific services that range from psychological counseling, financial and employment assistance, education, training, housing. Article 21 asks for specialist women's support services, article 23 for shelters, article 24 for 24-hour statewide hotlines and reporting by professionals (article 29).

Chapter V discusses substantive law for remedies for victims. Article 31 focuses on custody and visitation and recommends that "incidence of violence are taken into account" (article 31.1) Articles 32-40 require criminalization of psychological violence (33), stalking (34), physical violence (35), sexual violence, including rape, forced marriage, and culture is recognized as an invalid excuse to exercise any act of violence listed above (article 42). Articles 52 and 53 require the establishment of emergency orders that will require a perpetrator to leave the shared residence and article 53 discusses restraining orders of protection. Article 57 provides for free legal aid in the instances of domestic violence. Gender-based violence is declared as grounds for granting asylum (article 60). Finally, Chapter IX details a monitoring mechanism of implementation via a group of experts on action against violence against women and domestic violence and country reports.[92]

Though many policy recommendations have already been noted in prior international documents, i.e., the Beijing Platform for Action, the Istanbul Convention (2011) is unique in three ways. First and foremost, it recognizes and defines domestic violence as a separate and, to some extent, unique form of violence against women, and

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[92] Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, Istanbul, 11.V.2011 https://www.coe.int/fr/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/090000168008482e

focuses predominately on this issue (while also acknowledging the underlying mechanism of fluid power imbalance between men and women, which is part of feminist framing of interpersonal relations). Second, it openly settles the public-private divide by explicitly acknowledging state responsibility to protect women from domestic violence in the private (in my definition, intimate) sphere. Finally, "unlike other international treaties for tackling gender-based violence, the Istanbul Convention provides for the implementation of comprehensive and coordinated policies between national and governmental bodies involved in prevention, prosecution, and protection activities" (the European Parliament, 2019). Namely, the Convention provides for the group of experts (Article 66) and monitoring reports as well as visits to a breaching state-party.

Since the Convention explicitly focuses on domestic violence, recognizes its residence in the intimate space but mandates states to enter this space to protect women, one can expect the galvanization of domestic violence issues in the CEE party politics, since this is a space where a state is reluctant to go but also a space of fluid intimate relations that are hard to regulate consistently. Also, to ratify the Convention means to assume responsibility to protect women in the intimate sphere, and this remains for the resolution at the level of national politics. I now turn to the effect of the Istanbul Convention (2011) on party positions on the issue of domestic violence and briefly compare them to the three time-periods discussed above.

2.5. CEE party platforms after the Istanbul Convention (2012-2019)

The goal of the preceding sub-sections has been to trace norm development and its reflection in the CEE party platforms and to note whether policies on the issue have followed. The focus of this sub-section shifts to the juxtaposition of the period before and

after the Istanbul Convention to see if a more clearly articulated regional norm has galvanized a dormant cleavage in the CEE party politics, as suggested in the introduction to this chapter. Table 6 below summarizes these trends by thematic area and by the time period.

Table 6. Thematic analysis of CEE party platforms across the dimensions of protection against domestic violence, 1990-2019

Time period	General mentions	Legislation	Victim services	Provider training	Awareness Prevention	Perpetrator services	Istanbul Convention ratified
Bulgaria							
1990-1997	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
1998-2006	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2007-2011	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2011-2019	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Croatia							
2003-2011	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	-
2012-2019	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
The Czech Republic							
1990-1997	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	-
1998-2006	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	-
2007-2011	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	-
2011-2019	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Latvia							
1990-1997	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
1998-2006	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2007-2011	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2011-2019	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Lithuania							
1990-1997	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	-
1998-2006	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	-
2007-2011	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2011-2019	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
North Macedonia							
1990-2004	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	-
2005-2011	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-
2012-2019	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Poland							

1990-1997	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
1998-2006	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2007-2011	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2011-2019	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Romania							
1990-1997	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	-
1998-2006	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2007-2011	No	No	No	No	No	No	-
2011-2019	No	No	No	No	No	No	-

Source: Author's analysis of party manifestos available in Manifesto Research Projects Corpus and online (for the latest elections). For Poland, only parties in government have been analyzed throughout the period under study.

From the discussion in the previous sub-sections as well as from the data in table 5, a few pre-Istanbul trends emerge. First and foremost, although some parties have included domestic violence into their agendas before 1997 (the year when most of them have applied for the EU membership), the parties in the third-wave candidate states of North Macedonia and Croatia have been the most vocal on the issue.[93]

What is more, most statements the parties make on the issue refer to the recognition of the problem and a commitment to service provisions, both to victims and perpetrators, as well as punishment for domestic violence. What is largely absent from the party manifestos is any feminist frames of domestic violence as stemming from the unequal power relations and the need to transform those, though some parties in the Czech Republic acknowledge the need to move the issue into the public space before it can be successfully addressed.

Further, CEE parties do not perceive of violence against women as a single issue. Rather, they separate it into trafficking, prostitution, and domestic/intimate partner violence. It appears that if the issue of domestic violence is discussed at all, it is first introduced in general terms by recognizing the problem and committing to an action,

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[93] I partially attribute this trend to the increased EU monitoring on the issue since 2006 (Montoya 2013).

often legislative, with more services and programs introduced and discussed as the time goes by.

The preceding sub-sections and data in table 5 have revealed that, for the most part, CEE parties have not been strong proponents to protect women from domestic violence. In Romania, Poland, Latvia, and Bulgaria they have remained silent for years on the issue. However, the Istanbul Convention is hypothesized to have an effect on party politics by making the cleavage more visible. This proposition finds some support in the data.

The Istanbul Convention appears to have broken this silence everywhere, but Romania and Bulgaria, though a caveat needs to be introduced regarding Bulgaria. Though parties in Bulgaria, with the exception of *GERB* in 2013, have failed to include any promises to combat domestic violence into their platforms, they have been very vocal about it in the press and during parliamentary hearings (see chapter 2). In other countries, since the adoption of the Istanbul Convention (2011), at least one party not only explicitly introduces the need for government action on protection against domestic violence but also discusses specific policies and services. Some directly reference the Convention. For example, in Croatia, in the 2016 electoral cycle more party platform space is dedicated to domestic violence. A liberal-conservative *Croatian Democratic Union* pledges "more shelters, legal, and financial assistance for victims of domestic

violence" as well as fulfilling the obligations under the Istanbul Convention (*HDZ* 2016).[94] The party is in government since 2016.

In the Czech Republic, in 2013, *The Communist Party of the Bohemia and Moravia* returns to the discussion of domestic violence and promises "a consistent fight against all forms of violence against women, children and the elderly" (*KSČM* 2013, 15). The *Green party* extends its pledges to create a "system of educational programs for offenders of domestic violence and public education and awareness-raising activities, including education at schools through framework educational programs" (*SZ* 2013, 5). The *Greens* also promise to "support the specialization of the Czech Police and Justice bodies in cases of domestic violence" and to "build on the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence" (*SZ* 2013, 5). In 2014, the Czech Republic finally adopts an Act on Victims of Crime to protect victims of domestic violence. In 2016, *the Social Democratic Party* commits to victim services and to strengthening the legal protection of domestic violence victims, but no other party mentions the issue in 2016, including *the Greens*. Neither of these parties, however, becomes a member of government led by ANO.

In Lithuania, in 2012, *Labor Party* pledges "to pay special attention to the reduction of domestic violence and create a mechanism for legal protection of weaker family members" (*DP* 2012). Lithuania subsequently adopts an anti-domestic violence

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[94] They write: "We consider absolutely unacceptable any form of physical, psychological or sexual violence and will significantly improve the system of prevention and protection against all forms of violence through institutions and support to civil society organizations whose activities are directed in this area. We will fully fulfill our obligations under the Istanbul Convention, which entered into force for the Republic of Croatia in 2014. The Convention contains areas of prevention, protection against persecution, as well as basic measures for monitoring the enforcement of regulations."

national program in 2014. *Labor Party* is a member of the governing coalition at the time.

In 2016, *Labor Party* promises "to develop the infrastructure of family and community services, and pay particular attention towards decreasing domestic violence," including comprehensive services for children that have experienced domestic violence as well as services for perpetrators and victims (*DP* 2016). In the same electoral cycle, the *Lithuanian Peasants and Greens Union*, a party leaning socially conservative, objects against "the fight against violence [being] a pretext to integrating "social gender" into the Lithuanian legal system", but at the same time pledges to "develop a one-stop shop for combating domestic violence" (*LVŽS* 2016, 5).[95] The *Lithuanian Social-Democratic Party* recognizes that domestic violence is a crime and advocates for "complex measures to secure the victims security, responsibility of perpetrators, and crime prevention" as well as "quality legal aid" (*LSDP* 2016). Both parties are part of the governing coalition in 2016-2017.

Parties in North Macedonia also continue to actively expand on the issue of domestic violence, with more and more parties participating in the conversation. In 2013, *IMRO-DPMNE* (in government in 2014-2015) promises the awareness raising campaigns and support for victims in the form of shelters (*IMRO-DPMNE* 2013, 164). In 2014, *Coalition Civic Action for Macedonia* makes references for the Beijing Platform for Action and commits to more education, awareness, and services. Comprehensive

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[95] They further suggest developing "violence prevention system. Such a system includes public information, 24 hours a day active emergency telephone services, support and, where appropriate, custody of violence victims, training for professionals, communities will enable those responsible officials to select appropriate response measures on a case-by-case basis; and coordinate the work of the different services."

domestic violence legislation is passed in 2014 but this fact does not eliminate the issue from the party agenda.

In 2016, the *Social Democratic Party* (in government since 2016) pledges to adopt the Law on Gender Based Violence that will clarify the definition of domestic violence, include mental violence, and criminalize threats and coercion as well as ratify the Istanbul Convention, which is referred to in the text by its full name. The Social democrats also promise services for victims, namely, shelters, a 24-hour hotline, employment of domestic violence victims, and crisis centers programs for perpetrators. These pledges can be read as the translation of the Convention into national politics.

Further, *Democratic Renewal of Macedonia* (also a member of the governing coalition in 2016), a green liberal political party, is concerned about the rising numbers of domestic violence victims. They are committed "to fight domestic violence in order to interrupt intergenerational transmission, which is a prerequisite for raising future healthy generations who will build healthy, non-violent relationships in the family, and thus in the wider community" (*DOM* 2016). They also commit themselves to prevention and protection against domestic violence, employment for domestic violence victims, and improvement of services and shelters.

IMRO-DPMNE (in opposition since 2016 in North Macedonia) promises continued financing and lists specific budgetary commitment for the prevention, training, and protection measures as well rehabilitation both for domestic violence and trafficking victims as well as special conditions for employment for domestic violence victims. They recycle their program from 2013 on this issue.

Finally, an Albanian ethnic party, *Democratic Union for Integration* (also a member of the governing coalition in 2016), also promises to advance and enforce the legal framework " in the fight against violence and unconditional support for victims of violence", strengthen victim services and raise awareness, 24-hour hotlines and special domestic violence offices in each municipality as well as housing and psychological services (*DUI* 2016). No new national policies have been adopted in Macedonia but the Istanbul Convention is ratified in 2018.

For the first time in two decades, a Bulgarian party discusses domestic violence in its platform in 2013. Surprisingly, *GERB – Citizens for the European Development of Bulgaria* owns the issue. They espouse to strengthen the protection of rights of the victims of domestic violence and trafficking and propose "a legislative reform to provide increased protection against domestic violence, including compensation for victims" (*GERB* 2013). *GERB* drops its discussion of domestic violence later in 2017, after their failure to secure the ratification of the Istanbul Convention while being leaders of the governing coalition.[96] Nevertheless, Bulgaria amends its Criminal Code and criminalizes domestic violence in 2018.

In Latvia, domestic violence issue first appears in 2018 electoral cycle. *Latvian New Party for Development* not only calls for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention but also advocates for the legal protection of all family types, including same-sex partners, framing it as part of their demographic policy and the desire to improve the lives

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[96] While in power, GERB's leader and Prime Minister Borissov attempted to begin the ratification of the Convention but decided not to send it out to the Parliament after the Constitutional court found it "unconstitutional" and the political opposition to the convention was mounting (Dimitrov 2018).

of children,[97] which immediately creates a pushback from the conservative parties in the system who have avoided talking about domestic violence due to it being resolved in Latvia with the introduction of restraining orders of protection in 2014.[98]

For the first time in almost 30 years, domestic violence also appears in Poland in the electoral discourse of governing parties in 2019 electoral cycle. *Civic Coalition* pledges to protect women against domestic violence through amendments to the criminal code and enforcing the existing laws as well as via service provision for victims.[99] *The Democratic Left Alliance* claims that "women's rights are human rights" and offers victim services, prevention, prosecution of the perpetrators, comprehensive police training as well as combating gender, sexual, and racial stereotypes. Surprisingly, even a governing *Law and Justice* promises to take action against domestic violence (2019, 213), but does so in the context of their family policy and protection of families.

To conclude this section, it appears that international norm development on violence against women and domestic violence has been reflected in some CEE party platforms as well as in many policies on the issue that have been adopted since transition.

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[97] https://attistibaipar.lv/programma/pilna

[98] https://konservativie.lv/2014/05/17/jaunas-konservativas-partijas-programma/

[99] "Women living in the toughest conditions, abused by domestic torturers, require special legal and material protection of the state. We will change the Criminal Code so that the perpetrator is afraid of punishment and the punishment is imminent" (https://platforma.org/nasz-program,19).
• Protection of victims of violence Full law enforcement• Severe punishment for violence
Unpunished violence, especially against women, is one of the worst elements of poorly functioning the state today. The current parliament was one step away from passing legislation that protects perpetrators of domestic violence and intimidates its victims by discouraging their investigations inalienable rights. That is why we will introduce anti-violence policy that will guarantee full enforceability of the law, while ensuring effective protection of victims. It's about that will not only domestic violence, but also sexual crimes and all other manifestations of violence, including violence on the Internet or public life. Definition who is the victim and who is the aggressor cannot be associated with anyone's views political. The pursuit of the inevitability of penalties is not disputable here - for example, the perpetrator, not the victim should be forced to leave the shared accommodation" (https://platforma.org/nasz-program, 21).

At a first glance, these policies also appear to be a mandate fulfillment, though this contradicts theoretical expectations detailed in chapter 3. The analysis also suggests that the Istanbul Convention (2011) has made the issue of domestic violence more pronounced in party platforms across the CEE countries, with Romania remaining an exception. Section four explores systematically whether parties and their promises matter on this issue. The next section, however, details how feminist movements condition these effects.

3. Feminist movements, governments, and policy responsiveness: Theoretical mechanisms and operational definitions.

The preceding discussion shows that the issue of domestic violence has been largely articulated at the international level, with very few CEE parties willing to align with it in their electoral platforms. Increased attention has been paid to the issue at the party level after the Istanbul Convention has entered into force in 2014. It also appears that at least in some cases the adopted policies reflect the promises made in electoral manifestos.

Chapter 3, however, theorizes that policy responsiveness is the most challenging in the intimate sphere due to the increased guardianship of the intimacy after transition, the fluid nature of intimate relations, and the absence of the history of liberal government intervention in this site of human relations. The preceding sections have demonstrated a growing acceptance of state intervention in the intimate space codified in international norms but it does not mean that the tension has been resolved at the national level. A cursory reading of CEE politics over the last five years further suggests that this tension has been increasingly politicized.

According to Htun and Weldon (2012, 552), feminist movements across the world play a particularly important role in translating an intimate issue of domestic violence into the public sphere and pressuring governments to act on it: "VAW is rarely raised as an issue, much less a priority without pressure from feminists". The key reason feminist movements are indispensable in this process lies in the nature of the issue. There is, first, a need to raise awareness through small groups organizing to highlight the shared experiences with male violence, thus, to extract it from the private (intimate) sphere. Second, there is a need to translate it to policy-makers who may be resistant to the idea "of addressing VAW [because it] requires challenging male privilege in sexual matters and social norms of male domination more generally" (Brush 2003; Elman 1996; MacKinnon 1989, as quoted in Htun and Weldon 2012, 553). To successfully advocate for change, feminist movements across the world engage in awareness raising campaigns, conference organization, open letter writing, government lobbying and public protests, to name a few (ibid, 554).

Feminist movements in the U.S. and Western Europe are primarily grass-roots movements. For instance, anti-domestic violence movement has begun as a volunteer shelter movement. In contrast, feminist movements in CEE have had a different developmental trajectory. They have been professionalized from the start. They have also greatly benefitted from the development of international norms of human rights, democratization, and protection of women against violence (Fábián 2010, 249-251).

Despite these ostensible differences, my qualitative research[100] has illuminated the top-down bottom-up approach feminist organizations in the region adopt to build grass root capacity, similarly to Western movements. I use Project Kesher as an example. Though Project Kesher has come to the post-communist states from the West, its key strategy has been to create local leaders who, in turn, will empower more women, who, in their turn, will later become leaders in their communities. To achieve this, multiethnic and multi-faith coalitions have been built and small-group discussions have taken place. During these discussions, over time, a silence on domestic violence has been broken, as these group meetings and events have been perceived as safe spaces. Further, respectful interpersonal relations have been discussed and modeled. All this grass-root capacity building later translates in the engagement of local leaders with the media and local authorities to foster change.

Feminist NGOs in Poland and the Czech Republic have also initiated and maintained campaigns to pressure governments for policy change (Dabrowska 2007; Fábián 2010, 224, Röder 2007). So have feminist NGOs in Romania (Popa 2007) and Croatia (Dedić 2007). Chapter 2 has offered systematic evidence that feminist movements that work on domestic violence are behind placing an issue on the party agenda.

Other key mechanism of NGOs' impact in this policy domain noted by qualitative researchers is government consultations and lobbying. It has happened in all countries in

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[100] This supplemental research has been conducted in October-November 2019 at Brandeis University. It includes archival research of the Project Kesher materials and presentation of the Project Kesher, the largest Jewish-feminist organization that works in the former Soviet countries. It also used to work in the Baltic States.

the sample, including Latvia (Dabrowska 2007; Dedić 2007; Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007; Popa 2007; Putnina 2007; Röder 2007; Stoykova 2007).

Furthermore, in many cases, it has taken public protests to achieve the goal of meaningful government action. Krizsan and Popa (2018, 110), for example, note that feminist mobilization in the form of public protests have contributed to the criminalization of marital rape in 2000 after "a march in front of the Romanian Senate". November 2011 protests by women's rights organizations "resulted in the amendment of the law on domestic violence in 2012 to introduce crucial measures for victims, in particular the protection order and funding for shelters" (ibid, 111). Protest mobilization of feminist organizations in Poland has also been instrumental in "providing supportive context for amendments … to Domestic Violence Law" in 2009 (ibid, 109).

Overall, domestic violence policy area has been the most amenable for the penetration and impact by the feminist movements in the region owning both to the large number of feminist organizations working specifically on the issue of domestic violence as well as to the existence of international norms discussed in section 2 (Brunell and Johnson 2006; Dabrowska 2007; Dedić 2007; Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007; Popa 2007; Putnina 2007; Röder 2007; Stoykova 2007).

What is the relation between feminist movements and political parties in government when it comes to policy responsiveness on the protection against domestic violence? As chapter 3 theorizes, intimate relations are the least amiable for government action due to their fluidity and due to the protection of the intimacy by the liberal state that has no history of regulating it. Even if policy-makers come from the parties that have committed to fight domestic violence (and their commitment is a result of feminist

movement advocacy at the electoral level, as discussed in chapter 2), they may suffer

electoral consequences for following through on this promise due to trying to regulate the

intimate sphere. So their responsiveness is unlikely without strong feminist movements.

As Htun and Weldon note (2012, 553): "It is difficult for legislative insiders (members of

legislatures and bureaucrats) to take on social change issues without the political support

of broader mobilization." Therefore, it takes a concerted effort on behalf of the feminist

movements to send a strong signal via their strong presence in the public space (through

public protests or national media campaigns) to policy-makers about a wider societal

acceptance of such intervention into this sensitive intimate space. Therefore, I suggest

that the strength of the feminist movements who work on the problem of violence against

women conditions party responsiveness on the issue; and parties that have included this

issue into their platform should be the most responsiveness in the presence of such strong

movements.

Thus, *I hypothesize that policy responsiveness of governing parties on domestic*

violence is conditioned by the strength of the feminist movements (hypothesis 4).

How does the strength of the feminist movements is defined and measured? First

and foremost, as noted in previous chapters, I use the word feminist movements and

NGOs interchangeably in the CEE context. In this study, a feminist movement that works

on domestic violence is defined as an autonomous feminist NGO that is committed to

solving the problem of violence against women in general, and domestic violence in

particular.[101] In my coding, I roughly follow Htun and Weldon's (2012) coding scheme,

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[101] I also need to acknowledge that these organizations have deep transnational ties, thus they are also translators of the international norms into domestic politics in the region. This acknowledgement stems not only from the observations by the region experts (i.e., Johnson 2006, Brunell and Johnson 2010, Montoya

with the exception that I distinguish between mere government lobbying and political advocacy efforts, as noted on organizations' websites, and large-scale public protests and awareness raising campaigns that have been reported in national media.

I measure the strength of such movements as an ordinal variable that ranges from 0 to 4. Zero corresponds to the absence of any such organization in a country. One means domestic violence is recognized as one of the important issues by at least one organization, usually among other issues, but no advocacy efforts are listed as an organizational goal. The primary focus of such organizations is service provision. Two is assigned to the presence of organizations that list domestic violence among other issues and engage in political advocacy for women's rights, but not necessarily domestic violence. At level three, there are specific organizations that focus on violence against women and domestic violence as their only issue and engage in political advocacy but are not actively present in the public space, such as press or protests. Level four is assigned if there exists at least one organization that specifically focuses on violence against women and domestic violence, engages in political lobbying, and is successful at organizing national awareness campaigns and public protests. Section 4 below details the interactive model that I use to test hypothesis 4. Section 5 discusses analysis results.

4. Analytic technique

To account for the mediating effect of feminist movements on political parties' delivery on their promises, I use an interactive event history model. Though some

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2010), but from my own data collection. I originally had another coding category for transnational links of a given NGO but I dropped it in the end because any organization I have reviewed had ties either to the UN, European or American-based NGO or was funded by the EU or American-based organizations, such as the Soros Foundation. However, following Htun and Weldon (2012), I define autonomous as not being a part of any other organization, i.e., political party, NGO that works on human rights, a labor union.

scholars are concerned about the possible presence of multicollinearity in this model, this is the only model that allows capturing the conditioning effect of one variable on another and must be used when theory calls scholars to account for such conditionality (Kam and Franzese 2014). The intuitive rationale is that the effect of an independent variable on the dependent variable will be different at different levels of another independent variable, and should be modeled as such. This is precisely what the theory argues – only strong feminist NGOs make a difference in the outcome and they make it so only in the presence of formal political actors that are open to the idea to protect women from domestic violence (Weldon 2002, though for Weldon it is not political parties who align with the issue but rather bureaucracies). Because the dependent variable is binary and the data is annual, I employ an event history model for discrete data. Thus, the formal equation can be written as following:

$$\log (\lambda_i/1-\lambda_i) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \beta_2 x_{2i} + \beta_3 x_{1i*} \beta_4 x_{2i} + \dots \beta_k x_{ki} \qquad (1)$$

Equation (1) specifies λ_i in terms of the log-odds ratios of the probability of an event (policy adoption) occurrence to the probability of its non-occurrence. X_1 is the share of parliamentary seats held by government parties that have included domestic violence protection into their electoral programs, ranging from 0 to 100. This measure only calculates the share of seats of a government party that has mentioned domestic violence in its manifesto. If two or more parties have done so, their seat share is summed. X_2 is the strength of feminist NGOs that work on domestic violence, as described above. X_{ki} – are control variables, namely, a country's inclusion into the world society (being closer to the center should have a positive affect on the norm translation – Paxton et al. 2015), share of female representatives in the parliament, strength of veto players, type of

government, EU membership, and the rate of female homicide per 100,000 people (to account for the severity of the problem). This variable comes from the *World Bank World Development indicators*.

I estimate this model via MLE in Stata 13. I cluster standard errors by country to account for heteroscedasticity. I also add time splines to the model to account for time-dependence. Akaike information criterion is lower for the model with time-splines than for the one without them; therefore I proceed with the one that contains time-splines. Table 7 presents the results of my analysis.

5. Discussion of results

Table 7. Determinants of domestic violence policy adoption in CEE countries, 1991-2015

	b	(rSE)
Government parties seat share	-031***	(.012)
Feminist movements	.192**	(.087)
Parties*Movements	.009**	(.005)
Integration into world society	-1.77	(1.86)
Veto players	3.89***	(1.12)
EU membership	.456	(.885)
Female homicide	-5.54	(4.69)
Female parliamentarians	-.01	(.054)
Type of government	.04	(.202)
Spline 1	.564	(.345)
Spline 2	-.189	(.154)
Spline 3	-.226	(.244)
Constant	-4.99	(2.91)
N	121	
Pseudo R-sq	0.1579	
Notes: Most Latvian observations, with the exception of the last few years, do not contribute to the analysis due to the missing data on female homicide in Latvia, both in Latvian Statistical Data and the *World Bank* Data. ** $p<0.05$ *** $p<0.01$		

Results from an interaction model, presented in table 7, are not straightforward to interpret. They require additional calculations of the marginal effects across the levels of

strength of the feminist movements, as "each variable involved in the interaction terms of interactive models has multiple effects, not any single constant effect ... depending on the levels of other variable(s) with which it interacts" (Kam and Franzese 2014, 20). Therefore, interaction models are easier to interpret graphically, which I do below (Kam and Franzese 2014; Kostadinova and Kostadinova 2016).

Nevertheless, some meaningful interpretation can already begin from the results table. Namely, the coefficients on each interactive term show the effect of one variable on the outcome variable when the second variable in the interaction term equals zero (Kam and Franzese 2014, 20). Thus, the coefficient on government parties seat share, which is statistically significant, shows that the probability of government responsiveness on domestic violence issue decreases in the absence of feminist movements, in line with the theoretical predictions of chapter 3 and feminist scholarship that emphasizes the role feminist movements play in facilitating government action on violence against women (Htun and Weldon 2012; Weldon 2002).

It appears that even if the governing parties were open to aligning themselves with the issue, as their mentions of the issue in their electoral platforms suggests, their fear of regulating the intimate relations between a man and a woman and potential electoral penalty for doing so supersedes their electoral commitments. In line with the theory presented in chapter 3, parties are reluctant to act in this area. This can be interpreted as CEE parties being more concerned about possible backlash at the electoral box for legislating something extremely unpopular that strikes at the core of intimate relations than about appearing non-responsive on the issue.

This line of reasoning is supported by Mala Htun's (2003) research on Latin America. She finds that it has been conservative military government in Brazil and Argentina, not democratic ones, who have introduced laws on divorce, family equality, and abortion. I would add that in line with my theoretical framework this action is possible precisely because of the possibility of authoritarian governments to regulate the intimate and electoral consequences a democratic government may suffer that authoritarian government is sheltered from.

At the same time, feminist movements matter for the adoption of anti-domestic violence policies even in the absence of political parties that have campaigned on domestic violence issue, as a statistically significant coefficient on the movement variable shows, in line with the research findings on other regions (Htun and Weldon 2012; Weldon 2002) and qualitative reports on the region (Brunnell and Johnson 2006; Dabrowska 2007; Dedić 2007; Fábián 2010; Pilinkaite-Röder 2007; Popa 2007; Putnina 2007; Sotirovic 2007; Stoykova 2007).

Taken together with the finding in chapter 2, feminist movements that work on domestic violence matter both at the electoral and legislative stage of the policy-process, effectively translating international norms into national contexts, in line with the scholarship on norm translation references in the introduction. Weldon (2002, 198-199) reports that movements can work through either specialized government offices that are tasked with designing policies on women's issues or through a government commission on women that is working on appropriate legislative piece. In CEE countries, most specialized units that tackle women's issues fall within the Ministry of Family and Social Protection, rather than independent agencies and "are irrelevant for policy making"

(Waylen 2007, 165). In contrast, government commissions on women have been mentioned as points of feminist NGO access in Croatia (Dedić 2007), Latvia (Putnina 2007), and Lithuania (Avdeyeva 2015).

To further interpret the conditional effect of feminist movements on domestic violence policy adoption in the CEE, I calculate and graph the predicted probabilities of policy adoption conditional on the strength of feminist movements.

Figure 11. Conditional effect of feminist movements on anti-domestic violence policy adoption (predicted probabilities), 1990-2015
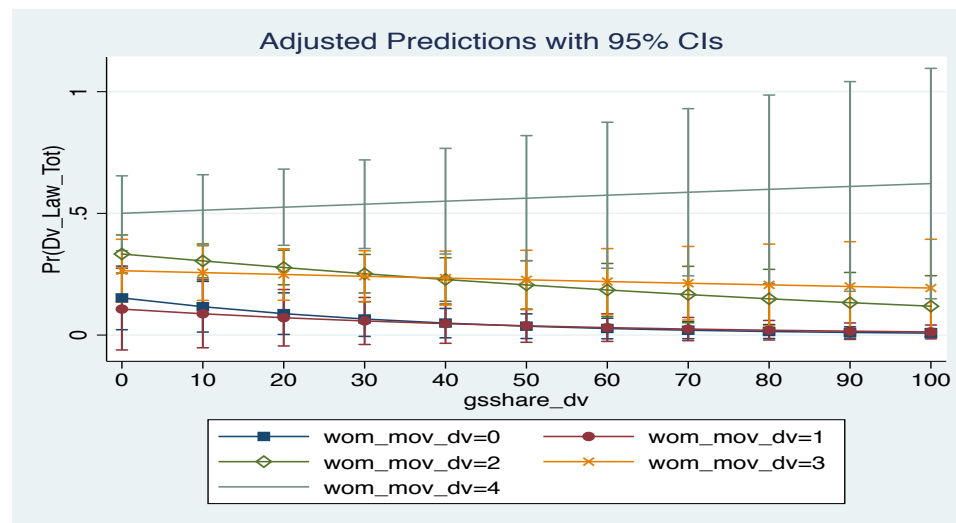
Source: Author's calculations.

To recall, zero corresponds to the absence of any feminist organizations working on domestic violence in a country. One means domestic violence is recognized as one of the important issues by at least one organization, usually among other issues, but no advocacy efforts are listed as an organizational goal. The primary focus of such organizations is service provision. Two is assigned to the presence of organizations that list domestic violence among other issues and engage in political advocacy for women's rights, but not necessarily domestic violence. At level three, there are specific

organizations that focus on violence against women and domestic violence as their only issue and engage in political advocacy but are not actively present in the public space, such as media campaigns or protests. Level four is assigned if there exists at least one organization that specifically focuses on violence against women and domestic violence, engages in political lobbying, and is successful at organizing national awareness campaigns and public protests, thus is present in public space, as captured by media reports. Government party seat share is plotted along X-axis. Government party seat share measure includes the share of seats held by a party (parties) that mentioned domestic violence in its (their) platform.

As the green trend line shows, predicted probabilities of policy responsiveness on domestic violence increase steadily in the presence of strongest feminist movements; namely, movements that are actively present in the public space through protests and national awareness raising campaigns. This stands in contrast to the other four trend lines. Though the stacking of the lines suggests that, overall, stronger movements increase policy responsiveness of parties that have included domestic violence issue into their platform, it takes the strongest movements to see any meaningful policy impact in line with research on social movements that suggests that high movement mobilization carries the significant policy implications (for a review see Amenta et al. 2010).

Graph 11 presents another ostensibly puzzling trend. The probabilities of policy adoption decrease in the presence of moderately strong feminist movements (level 2-3) as the number of seats held by parties committed to fighting domestic violence increases. I suggest the following interpretation. As the seat share of parties committed to domestic violence increases, so does the opposition. Due to the absence of signals of a wide

societal acceptance of anti-domestic violence policies that stronger feminist movements are able to translate to policy-makers, the conservative opposition, both in the face of political parties in opposition and conservative counter-movements and interest groups, feels emboldened. Given the controversial nature of anti-domestic violence policies, the parties in the legislature that have committed to the issue remain hesitant to proceed. This tentative explanation will require further exploration through process-tracing studies, beyond the scope of this dissertation. Emerging scholarship on the opposition to gender equality in Europe, especially in Poland and Romania, has noted the role strong opposition to reforms from conservative civil society groups play in hindering legislative progress on the issue (Krizsán and Popa 2018).

Two other variables merit discussion. First, women in parliament have no systematic effect on the legislative action on the domestic violence issue, though qualitative analysists point to their role in the process in some countries, such as the Czech Republic (Röder 2007) and Lithuania (Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007). This finding is in line with the earlier finding of Weldon (2002) that "percentage of women in the legislature is a poor predictor of policy outcome in the area of violence against women" (100). If most countries in the world are included in the analysis, the percentage of women in parliament may be positively and significantly associated with the scope of government action on violence against women, but this result does not hold across all regression models (Htun and Weldon 2018, 72). Thus, the relationship is not a robust one.

What Weldon (2002, 202) suggests, however, is a possible non-linear relation. It means that there is a difference for the policy outcome between no women in parliament

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and few women in parliament versus just incremental increase in the share of seats held by female parliamentarians (Dodson and Caroll 1991). My additional analysis (not reported here) does not offer any support for a non-linear relationship found in established democracies and suggested by Weldon (2002). As explained in earlier chapters, women in parliament can be adhering to the party positions and are also interested in re-election, thus making them even more unlikely candidates to advocate for domestic violence legislative action due to carrying the "electability" stigma. This finding may indicate that the theorized post-totalitarian legacy that makes post-communist governments particularly sensitive to the regulation of the intimate, coupled with the absence of history of government action in this area, may be responsible for this non-finding.

Finally, the actual level of domestic violence in the country does not appear to matter, either. This could be due to the absence of reliable and comparable data or due to the overall high levels of underreporting. Only recently has the EU made several attempts to address this issue through a number of special surveys on the prevalence of domestic violence in the region. Though the data collection instrument is not free of limitations and the data are to be interpreted with caution, EU FRA (2014) report based on 42,000 interviews across 28 member states finds that about 22% of women in the EU have experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 15. Among CEE countries, the highest prevalence of domestic violence has been reported in Latvia (32%), followed by Romania and Lithuania (24%), Bulgaria (23%), the Czech Republic (21%), Poland and Croatia (13%). The report also mentions the low awareness about domestic violence in the CEE, which potentially could have contributed to the underestimation of the size of

the problem, and the high levels of underreporting, both to authorities and friends and family (FRA 2014), which could have resulted in less government action.

6. Conclusion

The problem of domestic violence has long been framed by the international community as the problem of unequal power relations at the most intimate level and the desire of a man to dominate and control his female partner. Domestic violence is said to be prevalent in both traditional and modern cultures. While communism has done a lot to advance women academically and professionally, little has been done to transform the intimate relations between a man and a woman. No history of government action exists in this policy area, and the desire of the CEE countries to distance themselves from the post-totalitarian past strengthens the protection of the intimate, thus making government action unlikely.

This chapter has traced the development of the issue at the international, regional, and party level, pointing out that parties remain reluctant to take any commitments to fight domestic violence, though the Istanbul Convention has activated this cleavage in many countries, such as Poland, Bulgaria, and Latvia, where it has been dormant. The chapter also suggested that due to the issue lying in the intimate area of human relations, the Istanbul Convention arrived relatively late, is at the regional level, and the EU remains reluctant to adopt a hard legislation on the issue that will be required to be transposed by all member states. Though the European Parliament has recently passed a non-biding resolution to urge member states to ratify the Istanbul Convention.

Legislative measures in the forms of strategies, action plans, and laws to combat and prevent domestic violence have been adopted in every country in the sample. For

instance, Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, and Romania have passed and subsequently amended comprehensive domestic violence legislation, the Czech Republic has chosen to amend a number of legislative acts, and Latvian governments has chosen inaction up until 2014, when the policy on restraining orders has been adopted.

Political parties appear to act on this issue only in the presence of strong feminist movements, which are capable of organizing protests and media presence, thus moving the issue into the openly public sphere and signaling to political parties a wider societal support for action in this sensitive sphere of human relations. To build mobilization, CEE movements build small group spaces, in which the silence is broken and healthy relationship norms are taught, thus engaging in the top-down grass-root capacity building. In the absence of strong movements, however, even parties that have committed to the issue in their platform are reluctant to act, in line with the theory prediction. This chapter concludes the empirical part of the dissertation. I now turn to the discussion of how it all fits together in my conclusion.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

1. Introduction

More and more reports are coming from the region about an uneasy relationship between the governing right-wing populist parties and their attempts to limit women's rights. This is linked both to their belief in traditional gender roles and their uneasy relationship with Western European liberalism, to which the discourse of women's rights belongs. Since 1990s, feminist scholars, on the other hand, have noted "the return of traditionalism" to the region in practice, if not policy. At the time, policies seeking to challenge traditional gender roles have emerged, and many have gone beyond the biding requirements of EU law. In this dissertation, I have explored the role political parties have played in the promotion of such policies, which has been overlooked in the literature. I have also separated conceptually the sphere of the family/private into semi-private and intimate spaces due to the different histories of European government action and the different nature of relations in each space. I have argued that government responsiveness is limited by the locus of government action. Namely, government responsiveness is more likely in the public sphere and least likely in the intimate sphere where most of it is driven by strong feminist movements whose role is not only to find allies among government parties sympathetic to the protection of women in intimate relations, as shown by their statements in electoral manifestos, but also by sending signals of the wider societal support for such action.

In what follows below, I discuss how my findings connect to the broader scholarship on party system institutionalization and women's rights promotion in the

region as well as norm translation. I also outline implications for democracy. I further present the limitations of my study and provide directions for future research that, to my mind, should focus on the conservative backlash in the region and its implications for women's rights, practices and experiences, as well as pay more attention to policy implementation; however, challenging of a study that is. I conclude with an epilogue.

2. Party system institutionalization: issue ownership and policy responsiveness

Party system institutionalization encompasses three dimensions: "party connections with the electorate, the development of party organizations over time, and party performance on behalf of the wider political system (including governance)" (Webb and White 2007, 11). This dissertation has focused on two aspects of it – party connections with the electorate and party performance in governance. Namely, it has explored the question of whether CEE parties have become more partisan when it comes to gender issues and whether they are responsive in this policy area, given that policy responsiveness depends on the locus of government action, as chapter 3 argues.

Despite the contradictory findings in the economic policy domain (Careja and Emmeneger 2009; Tavits and Letki 2009), CEE parties, on average, tend to align with gender issues based on their ideology. Yet, this alignment is issue dependent. Ideology is a significant predictor of gender equality issue ownership. On average, the closer a party ideology is to the right the least attention is paid to gender equality in their platforms. At the same time, ideology is not a significant predictor of domestic violence and father's leave issue ownership, as revealed by analysis results in chapter 2.

Therefore, it can be concluded with caution that parties in the CEE may be becoming more institutionalized by acting in a partisan manner while acquiring newer

issues. It is important to note that it is not only parties on the left that own the issue of gender equality in the labor market, which might be expected given communism's attention to formal gender equality in the public sphere, but also liberal parties that align with this issue in the CEE. Protection against domestic violence and father's leave, however, do not appear to neatly map on the left-right continuum, and CEE parties do not appear to actively incorporate these issues into their platforms. Also, both issues remain in the making at the supranational EU and international level, with the first legally binding anti-domestic violence regional instrument entering into force in 2014.

The idea of policy responsiveness lies at the heart of democracy as a political system and is a sign of party system institutionalization. Empirical studies of Western democracies have suggested that political parties act responsively on a large variety of issues (Royed 2010; Thomson 2002) and earlier studies on Eastern Europe also found that overall, parties do enact policies that reflect the preferences of their voters, though this responsiveness is issue dependent (Kostadinova and Kostadinova 2016; Lipsmeyer 2009; Roberts 2010). At the same time, none of these studies have examined policy responsiveness on gender issues. The logic of the theory predicts equal responsiveness across policy areas, which is not the case, as chapter 3 argues. Even if a party has included a commitment to fight domestic violence, for example, it still may be too risky to follow through on it due to the locus of the issue in the intimate sphere. Furthermore, the question of the degree of the commitment, not adequately explained by the policy responsiveness theory, needs to be highlighted.

In my study, I observe some degree of policy responsiveness in the CEE. In the gender policy domain, it depends on whether policies aim at the public, semi-private, or

intimate space of human relations. In the public space, CEE parties appear to be responsive on gender equality issues. Namely, CEE governments in which parties have campaigned on gender equality increase the marginal probability of the affirmative action clause adoption.

Similar results emerged for the semi-private space that concerns extended family and parenthood. At first glance, CEE governments may appear not to fulfill a mandate in a narrow understanding of this term: a government's position on father's leave is not a significant predictor of the policy outcome in this issue area, and very few governments even seek such a mandate. Nevertheless, parties in the government appear to perceive of their mandates broadly. Part of gender equality mandate is also to equalize family roles when it comes to care for children, which is often linked to the ability of the wife to actively participate in the labor market. So this gender equality promotion mandate is used to also adopt father's leave policies, though many parties do not explicitly promise this in their manifestos. This finding is in line with what Andrew Roberts finds for the realm of economic policies: the parties are generally directly responsive to their voters when it comes to economic reform policies but demonstrate only "weak mandate responsiveness" on the issue of economic reforms (2010, 86). This means that parties do not scale back the economic reforms, even if they promise to do so, but appear generally responsive to the ideological positions of their voters.

Finally, CEE governments are not responsive when it comes to the protection of women against domestic violence, unless they are strongly pressured to do so by the feminist movements in the media and in the streets. I explain this non-responsiveness through the sensitive nature of domestic violence issue that seeks to transform the

intimate relation between a man and a woman, which has been heavily protected since the fall of the communism and the absence of prior government action history. The presence of strong feminist movements capable of putting people on the streets sends a signal for parties in the government that have included statements on the protection of women against domestic violence into their platforms that it is relatively safe to engage in government action in this space of human relations. This finding is in line with other scholarship on violence against women that time and again finds strong feminist movements behind government action in this policy domain (Brunell and Johnson 2006; Fábián 2010; Htun and Weldon 2018; Htun and Weldon 2012; Weldon 2002).

3. Actors behind women's rights promotion in the region

Parties, independent feminist movements, and women in parliament are behind women's rights promotion in the region. Yet, as the results of this study reveal, their influence is issue specific. Whereas political parties and women in parliament remain the key actors behind gender equality promotion in the public sphere and the adoption of father's leave in the semi-private space, feminist movements are the key players in placing issues that challenge traditional gender roles in these spaces of human relations, namely, father's leave and domestic violence, onto the agenda of CEE party systems. Feminist movements also drive policy responsiveness on domestic violence protection. However, when it comes to father's leave adoption feminist movements hinder rather than aid policy development.

Despite earlier scholarship that claims political parties have not been a significant political actor behind the promotion of women's rights in the region (Avdeyeva 2015, 95; Einhorn 2006, 53; Kostelecky 2002, 117; Rueschemeyer 1998), the key finding of this

dissertation is that parties matter, although their influence remains issue-specific. Since the early 1990s, many political parties across the CEE democracies have owned the issue of women's rights. For the most part, at the electoral level, the parties have aligned with gender equality promotion. The key themes that address gender equality emerge from the qualitative analysis of the manifestos. The first theme includes non-discrimination in the work place. This comprises protection from discrimination against working mothers and young women, often through the introduction of employment preferences for women or incentives for employers to hire more women. CEE parties that own this issue are particularly keen on offering support for women in business in the form of startup loans and business training. This theme is particularly pronounced in Croatia and Lithuania. Some CEE parties also suggest special training programs to increase women's competitiveness in the labor market. The parties are also dedicated to fighting gender stereotypes in education and attracting more women into male-dominated fields in all countries in the sample but Bulgaria. Finally, across all countries in the sample there is also a theme of work-life balance. The parties are willing to assist women in combining their work and family and emphasize the importance of father's greater engagement in the family. Fewer parties explicitly promise the introduction of father's leave. Protection against domestic violence does not appear as an important theme, either. If parties introduce this theme into their platforms, it is framed as service provision and legal support. With the exception of the *Greens* in the Czech Republic, no party frames this issue in feminist terms of unequal power hierarchies.

In contrast to the similarity of the thematic framing of women's rights, variation exists in the saliency of gender issues across CEE countries and over time. Parties in

Latvia, Bulgaria, and Romania are among the most resistant to adopt women's rights issues into their platforms. If gender equality remains more or less consistent on the agenda of a few Bulgarian and Latvian parties over time, Romanian parties have become silent on the issue since 2000s. Support for traditional family values, on the other hand, in these countries continues to dominate party platforms, with many parties dedicating around 7% of their manifestos to it, which I tentatively link with the presence of a strong organized Church (Catholic and Eastern Orthodox). The direct influence of the organized religion onto the party platforms, however, awaits empirical investigation in future research. On the contrary, women's rights are extremely salient in North Macedonia and the Czech Republic, where parties have been vocal not only on gender equality but also on protection against domestic violence. North Macedonia is the only country in the sample where parties, on average, spend more time discussing gender equality than traditional morality.

The previous section has already detailed the role played by CEE parties in government that campaigned on women's rights issues in delivering policies across three issue areas that challenge traditional gender roles. What needs to be added is the relative unconventionality of this finding. Previous literature has found that symbolic policies that seek to challenge traditional gender roles are among the hardest to enact (Blofield and Haas 2005; Htun 2003) and political parties do not play a role in the enactment of such policies (Htun and Weldon 2018). As my theoretical framework details, there is a need to further differentiate among symbolic policies that seek to transform traditional gender roles and affect women as a group. Whether government action is aimed at the public,

semi-private, or intimate space also becomes important for the probability of such action. So does the history of prior government action.

Two other groups of actors have been found in the literature to substantively advance women's rights in the region, though it is hard to assess their systematic impact from the existing qualitative studies. Whenever women in parliament are concerned, case studies have reported mixed findings that very well may be time and context specific (See for instance, Matland and Montgomery 2003 edited volume as well as QUING issue history reports).[102] My systematic tests, nevertheless, reveal that women in parliament play an important role in promoting gender equality in the labor market and father's leave but they do not matter for the adoption of the legislation to protect women against domestic violence. The results of my empirical analysis suggest that a 6 per cent increase in the share of female parliamentarians increases the probability of an affirmative action clause adoption by almost 1%. Also, a 1 per cent increase in the share of female parliamentarians increases the probability of father's leave adoption by about 17%.

I suggest that the same logic of issue-responsiveness that explains the behavior of governments that committed themselves to a given gender issue explains the behavior of female parliamentarians. Where an issue falls on the public-semi-private-intimate continuum determines its political support by female parliamentarians because they are subject to the same electoral pressures and fears as governing parties when it comes to legislating the intimate. Future research needs to examine whether a party's position on a specific gender issue aligns with its female parliamentarians' support for this issue.

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[102] Bulgaria: Stoykova 2007; Croatia: Dedić 2007; the Czech Republic: Röder 2007; Latvia: Putnina 2007; Lithuania: Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007; Poland: Dabrowska 2007; Romania: Popa 2007.

Both parties in government and female parliamentarians appear to advance women's rights in the public and the semi-private sphere. Strong feminist movements, in cooperation with the political parties committed to fighting domestic violence, remain instrumental in advancing legislation that transforms the intimate space, in line with the findings of previous research (Htun and Wedon 2012; Htun and Weldon 2018; Weldon 2002). Their impact remains limited in other policy domains. Based on the QUING reports, feminist movements across CEE that work on gender equality have not been particularly impactful in the policy-making process on gender equality across the region, Croatia being somewhat an exception (Dedić 2007).

When it comes to gender equality, very often feminist movements are denied "a seat at the table" and their expertise is not sought out (Dabrowska 2007; Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007; Popa 2007; Putnina 2007; Röder 2007; Stoykova 2007). As Pilinkaite-Sotirovic (2007, 75) puts it when commenting on gender equality policy process: "Civil society is still weak and only reacts to the policy development instead of bringing powerful initiatives to change policy discourse. Also, civil society is still ignored by the state bodies as a potential social partner". Even if feminist organizations are invited to the table, they still need to compete with other civil society groups that represent alternative views on family policy and gender relations, which may result in unfavorable compromises in the realm of gender equality or other civil society groups dominating the agenda (Krizsán and Popa 2018).

In addition, as results in Chapter 5 reveal, the presence of strong feminist movements actually hurts women's interests in the father's leave policy domain because it decreases the probability of the leave adoption. This fact finds an explanation in the

QUING reports on this issue development. The policy area of work life reconciliation remains one of the least open for penetration by the feminist organizations that work on gender equality across the region (Dabrowska 2007; Dedić 2007 Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007; Popa 2007; Putnina 2007; Röder 2007; Stoykova 2007). I tentatively suggest that this may be due to policy makers feeling that they have enough expertise in this policy domain due to its linkage to the labor market.

Finally, domestic violence policy area is the most amenable for the penetration and impact by the feminist movements in the region. It is first related to the large number of feminist organizations who work specifically on the issue of domestic violence in the region (Brunnell and Johnson 2006; Dabrowska 2007; Dedić 2007 Pilinkaite-Sotirovic 2007; Popa 2007; Putnina 2007; Röder 2007; Stoykova 2007) as well as the influence of international norms. Krizsán and Popa (2018) also report that these movements are the most successful in achieving policy change once they stop compromising with other civil society groups on the framing of the issue and engage in protests, as, for instance, happened in Romania in 2000 and in 2011.

4. Norm translation

The CEE politics of women's rights promotion that goes beyond the transposition of the "hard" EU norms also illustrates the process of "soft" norm translation into domestic politics and details the role of political parties and feminist movements in it. Though the European Union is very clear in requiring the member states to adopt non-discrimination legislation and policies that support work-life balance, no hard EU norm exists to compel the member states to engage into substantive gender equality promotion

in the labor market via affirmative action policies. Father's leave is also only recommended, and no specific domestic violence directive exists at the time of writing.

In this dissertation, I suggest that CEE parties' manifestos to some extent are affected by the EU "soft" norms due to the way they frame gender equality in the labor market, as section 3 discusses. This can further be read as a case of "over compliance". EU gender equality legislation has been developed in the context of social legislation and aims at deeper economic integration of women into the labor market as well as assistance to parents in combining work and family life. This is precisely what I observe in the manifestos of CEE political parties. Nevertheless, the parties retain control over how much to "over comply". Many of the member and candidate states do not move beyond the required minimum and do not adopt affirmative action clauses, including Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Poland. Some shy away from the implementation of father's leave as well. This includes North Macedonia, Croatia, and the Czech Republic. I suggest that the cases of over compliance may be interpreted as stronger commitment on behalf of the states to the EU gender equality norm, but future research should examine this proposition in more detail, because it can also be instrumental.

When it comes to domestic violence, it is international norms that are being translated, though the EU plays a big role in supporting feminist NGOs in the region that work on this issue (Fábián 2010; Montoya 2013). Given that each country, with the exception of Latvia that has minimal policies to protect women against domestic violence, has adopted measures to protect women against domestic violence and the role feminist movements have played in this adoption, this is the case of international norm translation into domestic politics, with a limited impact of political parties at the electoral

phase. Major battles occur at the legislative stage, and there is an ongoing resistance to the protection of women against domestic violence in the region (Krizsán and Popa 2018). There is also "norm stretching…as to be easier to endorse by mainstream policy actors and results in policies framed in degendered individual rights term" (Krizsán and Popa 2014). This suggests that a successful translation of international norms into domestic context still hinges on the acceptance of these norms by the formal political actors, which has not been the case during the observation period. Nevertheless, my additional analysis of party positions on domestic violence between 2015 and 2018 suggests a cleavage activation, which I link to the clarification and strengthening of the previously contested international norm of a woman's right to be protected in the intimate relation. The Istanbul Convention (2011) has delivered such clarification. It remains to be seen if the policies will follow to reflect this stronger norm, given a widespread resistance by many countries in the region to the Convention specifically and the growing resistance to women's rights in general (Kuhar and Patternote 2017; Verloo 2018).

5. Implications for democracy

The findings described above suggest a cautious optimism about the state of democracy in the CEE, which is refreshing amidst the rise of illiberalism in the region (Rupnik 2016). The origin of this optimism is twofold. On the one hand, this dissertation highlights healthy patterns of competing narratives and political actors that support them. On the other hand, it reveals policy responsiveness on the issues located in public and semi-private spheres of human relations.

Though this dissertation does not discuss alternative narratives of women's role in society and counter-norm production in detail, they are particularly common among

populist and nationalist parties in the region as well as among other civil society actors and the Church (cf. Kuhar and Patternote 2017; Verloo 2018). It is precisely against these narratives that liberal and left parties and feminist movements promote the idea of women's rights protection. It is a dialectical process of issue creation and contestation that a liberal democracy is unthinkable without.[103] Nevertheless, if freedom of expression of political actors, media, and civil society organizations that push against a government's narrative of traditionalism is compromised, we might be treading towards authoritarianism, not a mere backsliding. Whether CEE democracies find a will within themselves to push back against such assaults on democracy remains to be seen. The Polish 2019 parliamentary election gives hope that this might be the case.

Another sign of hope comes from some political parties and feminist organizations that keep pushing back. Chapter 6 illustrates that intensified attacks on women's and LGBTQ rights by the populist parties in the region against the Istanbul Convention (2011) have been met with greater attention to women's rights in countries where parties have not been vocal on this issue for decades, namely in Poland and Latvia. In Bulgaria, it galvanized feminist organizations that managed to put hundreds of women and men on the streets in Sofia in November 2018 in support of domestic violence victims and to call for political action to protect women from violence (Dimitrov 2018). Similarly, O'Dwyer (2018) reports a higher degree of the LGBTQ movement activism in countries where populist parties attained governing positions.

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[103] Though attacks on the feminist organizations in Poland in 2017 seeking to stop their activities go beyond mere issue contestation and borders with authoritarianism. See further https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/12/03/poland-no-friend-women.

In addition, the #MeToo movement has found its way into CEE countries, though it is not as strong as it is in the US and almost non-existent in South-Eastern Europe (no movement appeared in Croatia, for example) (Srebotnjak 2019). The #MeToo is a new grass-root movement that has gained momentum in 2018. It actively uses social media platforms to unite survivors of sexual assault and harassment (particularly in a professional environment), to break the silence, and to empower survivors. In the context of post-communist countries, a similar idea has been adopted by the Russian and Ukrainian feminists to unite domestic violence victims and to show that domestic violence is never O.K.

"In Hungary the campaign has been largely limited to liberal and cultural circles. In Poland, around 36,000 posts using the #JaTeż (the #metoo in Polish) and the #metoo hashtags appeared in the media between 15 and 22 October, however the campaign soon lost its initial momentum. In Romania hundreds of stories appeared on social media after #metoo took root, but the movement did not produce any substantial results" (Srebotnjak 2019). It has also made an impact in Lithuania by making the public relatively accepting of the victims who choose to speak up (Human Rights Watch 2018). The movement has also led to the adoption of the Convention on Violence and Harassment by the International Labor Organization in 2019 (Human Rights Watch 2019).

It remains to be seen how and whether these movements will affect politics in the region or whether it will witness the resurrection of traditionalism beyond the level that has been seen in recent years. Because CEE governments appear to act responsively when it comes to gender issues in the public and semi-private sphere, it also means that the populists in government may follow the suit and engage in instituting policies that

challenge women's rights. However, the new technological capability to connect women with one another via social media platforms, break the silence, and show strength in numbers resembles the mechanisms of grass-root organization building by the feminists of the second wave in the West, which potentially provide broader opportunities for the feminist movements to push back. All in all, these developments require further observation and investigation.

At the same time, from the studies on gender and populism in other countries, namely, the US, Germany, and Russia, it appears that states that are moving towards right-wing populism are also moving into the direction of increased uses of machismo tropes, women objectification, traditional gender roles glorification and misogyny in public discourse. These become tools of regime legitimation (Boatright and Sperling 2019; Horst and Gonendaal 2017; Sperling 2015). It remains to be seen how populist parties handle women's rights in their policymaking. This study finds parties in government to be responsive when they address gender issues in the public and semi-private sphere. Put in light of the increased populist politics in the region, this finding raises more concerns than it brings hope.

6. Limitations

Scholars, and I am no exception, do their best to deliver as strong of a study as possible, using the resources they have. No study, however, is free from limitations, and this study is no exception.

6.1. Case selection and generalizability of findings

The first limitation stems from the case selection and a limited sample of post-communist countries, included in the analysis due to data availability and research time

constraints. This precludes the broader generalizability of the findings. Also, it is unclear for now if adding other post-communist democracies to the sample will substantially change the results (I think it will not, but further robustness tests are in order). On the one hand, in Slovakia, not included in the analysis, the parliament keeps protecting women's reproductive rights (Riba 2019). On the other hand, some serious offenders of women's rights, such as Hungary, have not been included in the sample. Recent development in Hungary include zero tolerance policy for migrants and withdrawal of the government support for domestic violence services, effective ban on women's studies as of 2018, and elimination of women from politics (The Guardian 2018).

It remains to be seen if the trends observed between 1990-2015 remain the same, as the time goes by and more observations are added to the dataset as well as other policy domains, such as reproductive rights, are analyzed. For instance, not all is well in Poland, where the ruling *Law and Justice* is continuing its assault on women's organizations and abortion rights. Bad news is coming from North Macedonia on the issue of reproductive rights as well (Katevska and Spasovka 2019).

This dissertation does not examine the issue of reproductive rights due to its non-existence in party platforms. Neither it has been possible to read through the manifestos of all the Polish parties. I have only examined the manifestos of the governing parties until 2015. A closer reading of the manifestos presented by all the parties for 2015 and 2019 parliamentary elections suggest that parties have been actively including women's rights into their platforms. It is hard to say whether it has been the case before 2015 among electoral parties. The data that I have managed to collect suggest that Polish governing parties have dedicated very limited attention to gender issues. Yet, the absence

of gender issues in the manifestos does not mean that battles over women's rights have not taken place, both in the Polish parliament, in the media, or on the streets (Chivens 2010; Kramer 2007; Krizsán and Popa 2010; Korsvik and Warat 2016; Korolczuk and Saxonberg 2015; Matynia 2010).

6.2. Outliers

Another limitation of this study is its focus on broad average trends in the sample as well as in the qualitative data. It is by design since my primary research goal is to examine systematic relations among the key predictors behind policies that seek to advance women's rights as well as identify broader thematic trends in party commitments to women's rights. Though I do explore outliers in some chapters, statistical analysis is not suitable for uncovering the meanings behind these outliers, so my suggestions are tentative. I believe it will take another project or two to explore why political parties in Romania drop women's rights from their platforms in 2000s. Another project can focus just on the reasons behind the reluctance of some left parties, i.e., *BSP* in Bulgaria, to align with women's rights as well as the reasons behind ownership of these issues by conservative parties, i.e., *HDZ* in Croatia.

6.3. Substantive vs. nominal women's rights promotion

Finally, there is a difference between substantive and nominal women's rights promotion. Though advancing women's rights in party platforms and then through policies is the first important step in achieving substantive promotion of women's rights (Weldon 2002), the road to real equality, transformation of gender roles, and protection from violence in intimate relations is much longer and dwindling. The assessment of the success of this journey remains challenging to execute (Blofield and Haas 2013) due to

the disagreement among experts of what constitutes such success and how to measure it. Though the need to do so is pressing in order to move the field of gender and politics beyond its focus on policy adoptions (Mazur 2017). Thus the study of policy implementation across all three policy domains and its effect on the improvement of women's lived experiences needs to follow.

Another issue that this study is not able to disentangle is the difference between normative and instrumental commitments to women's rights by the CEE political parties. On the one hand, partisan alignment of gender equality and liberal and left ideologies outlined in chapter 2 may be cautiously interpreted as a sign of normative commitment to women's rights by these parties. On the other hand, some parties' inconsistency in raising this issue in every electoral cycle may equally be interpreted as a sign of instrumentalism. Similarly, parties and female parliamentarians' support for some policies that promote women's rights and deal with gender issues located in the public and semi-private sphere may be purely instrumental as well. In addition to the parties wanting to appear responsive to their voters in the next election cycle, adopting symbolic measures to promote affirmative action may be seen as an easy way out when action in other policy domains that are also watched by the European Union, such as corruption, appear unattainable.

Similarly, father's leave may be instituted not with the goal to reverse traditional gender roles but to support families and increase birthrates. The Polish case offers some indirect support for this claim because it is the country where policy makers have been particularly active in legislating father's leave. This brings me to the last limitation of this study.

Because the dependent variable is measured as an event of policy adoption across all three policy domains under the investigation, it is more successful in capturing the substantive meaning of a given policy outcome when it comes to father's leave and affirmative action in the labor market than in the case of domestic violence policies. In other words, when it comes to domestic violence policies, the measure tells us little about the content of such policies, which may (and often do) stray away from the feminist frames of the issue of domestic violence in the post-communist context (Fábián 2010) as well as create unintended consequences that hurt women rather than help them, as is the case with Croatian domestic violence legislation (Human Rights Watch 2016).

At the time, it has been very challenging to come up with a better measure to capture the variation in the content of domestic violence policies that is also suitable for statistical analysis. This is so due to the lack of annual data in the United Nations database and a database that encompasses all government laws on domestic violence, similar to the one ILO maintains for labor market policies. In my future research, I leave open the possibility of adopting the same coding approach I used while coding anti-discrimination legislation to focus on explicitly feminist policy measures or lack thereof in the CEE legislation and frameworks on domestic violence, not simply register an event of policy adoption. Frame analysis (Verloo 2005) appears to be an alternative way to examine the content of the policies aimed at assisting women and much work is being done in this tradition already (Kantola 2006; Kantola 2010; Montoya 2013; Lombardo and Forest 2013; QUING project 2007; Verloo 2005; Verloo 2018). Nevertheless, this approach does not land itself easily for statistical cross-national and over-time analysis.

7. Future research

This study has raised as many questions as it has answered. This provides fruitful ground for future research projects. In addition to what I discuss above, future research should proceed along the following four directions.

There is a need to engage in a detailed examination of counter-norm production on gender issues and beyond in the CEE context and the role political parties play in this process, as, to my knowledge, there are only two edited volume (Kuhar and Patternote 2017 and Verloo 2018) available on the subject. Currently, the *Manifesto Project* counts the share of party manifestos dedicated to traditional family and morality but leaves out any specific frames that are invoked by the political parties as well as any specific promises they make on this issue. Also, analysis is still lacking in how these promises translate into policies and whether they systematically affect policy reversals, if any.

Future research will also examine the nexus among gender attitudes, populist parties in government, and their impact on women's rights protection. The CEE populist parties have received much attention in the news in the last few years. Nevertheless, the field is still lacking a shared conceptualization and operationalization of a populist party. To overcome this challenge, I propose building and validating a measure of a populist party that takes into account both its ideology and its intra-party organization, thus marrying two distinct approaches in Comparative Politics to the study of populist parties. Using new survey data from the Eurobarometer and Life in Transition III survey, I suggest exploring of the link between traditional gender attitudes and support for right-wing populist parties in the region. Finally, I will assess the role CEE conservative populist parties in general and female policy makers in particular play in sustaining and

promoting traditional gender policies in the region. Taken together, these studies will further contribute to our understanding of democratic (non-)responsiveness in new democracies and the barriers to women's rights promotion in the region and beyond.

The third research avenue is to continue the systematic examination of the role feminist NGOs play in female empowerment and lobbying for women's rights that extends beyond a small-N research designs. Namely, one needs to explore the successful and failing strategies in lobbying for women's rights in a relatively unfriendly political context to see if any similar patterns behind successful and failed advocacy emerge, similar to Bunce and Wolchik's (2010) study on the strategies of the CEE opposition seeking to topple authoritarian leaders in the region.

Finally, this dissertation leaves unexamined the question of whether a government's position on women's rights increases the chances of compliance with the EU directives and international treaties, such as the Istanbul Convention (2011). Given data availability for the whole EU-28, it is possible to systematically examine whether a government's position on traditional morality and family is a significant predictor for a country's failure to ratify the convention. This research can be extended to all democracies in Europe and Latin America to test whether any similar systematic relation exists between a government's position on traditional morality and ratification of the International Labor Organization Convention on Violence and Harassment (2019).

8. Epilogue

In conclusion, I would like to say that I am a strong believer in women's empowerment and rights, in building their autonomy and self-capacity as well as creating healthy intimate relations free of violence, control, and domination. I am also a firm

believer in a pluralist democracy, which by definition is about respectful treatment of otherness and respect for an individual right to live one's life as they choose, as long as it does not violate the rights of others.

Thus, I am weary of the world in which one worldview, whether feminism or traditionalism, seeks to dominate public discourse. Rather, a dialogue between the two in party platforms, in the media, civil society, or parliamentary debates is a sign of a healthy democracy at work, no matter how much the opponents disagree with one another. Otherwise, there is a real danger of silencing a large majority of citizens and delegitimizing their voices.

However, such dialogue presupposes effective democratic institutions. The moment one side tries to gain an unfair advantage in using these institutions, we are on a slippery slope to democratic backsliding. This appears to be the case with the populist parties in the region trying to restructure such institutions to gain an unfair electoral advantage, and silence the voices of those they disagree with by openly attacking civil society actors working on women's rights promotion. Once the institutions have been altered to serve the interests of the right-wing populist parties, regardless of whether or not they are supported by large majorities, it collapses the space for political action not only for civil society actors but also for political parties that align with women's rights promotion. This means that women's rights and lives in the region are more under threat now than they have been during the period examined in this study.

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Appendix 1. Data collection procedures

I. Reading the Manifestos: Instructions for the translators.[104]
Please highlight, number and translate sentences and passages, if any, **on the following issues as well as any other promise** you feel is related to gender issues but it is not on this list. Use this list as a reference. You do not need to specify which category your sentence belongs to as long as you feel it falls within one of these categories or any unspecified category that you think also covers gender issues.

    a. *Parental leave policies and campaign promises on parental leave*.
    Possible Examples:
- a promise of an introduction of mandatory paternity leave;
- extension of an existing maternity leave;
- offering compensation or promises of increased compensation for maternity/paternity leave;
- any promise to put women back home or to help mothers raise children;
- any promise protecting a woman's right to employment during pregnancy and after
- any other statements you deem necessary

    b. *Provision of childcare for children between the years of 1 and 3*.
    Possible Examples:
- a promise to provide state-sponsored/subsidized childcare/pre-schools, etc.
- a promise to extend the coverage/affordability of existing daycare centers/pre-schools;
- any promise regarding early childhood education

    c. *Gender equality legislation and campaign promises on gender equality*.
    Possible Examples:
- to end harassment and discrimination in the workplace;
- to ensure women get equal opportunities;
- equal pay for equal work;
- promise for quotas for female leaders/politicians
- promise to put more women in leadership roles
- any other you deem appropriate

    d. *Abortions and access to contraception as well as other women's health regulations*
    Possible Examples:
- ban/limit access to abortions;
- extend access to abortion;
- extend access to contraception;
- limit access to contraception;
- promote childbirth;
- encourage childbirth;
- mandate women to undergo mandatory medical procedures, such as vaccinations
- any other you deem appropriate

    e. ***Domestic and partner violence.***[105]
    Possible Examples:

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[104] Though the written memo emphasizes promises, the translators were instructed to pay attention to any statements they thought related to gender issues. Many statements were treated as soft "promises" during the data collection stage. The assumption was made that if a party makes any statements on gender issues, we need to record them because I expected parties that mention gender issues and those that do not to behave differently when it comes to their legislative behavior in the area of gender legislation.

[105] Statements on human trafficking were excluded from the data collection.

- promise to raise awareness about intimate partner violence and/or make it a punishable offense
- promises to decriminalize domestic violence
- negating or downplaying the issue of domestic violence

ANY OTHER PROMISE/STATEMENT NOT COVERED ABOVE THAT YOU FEEL IS RELEVANT FOR WOMEN.
THANK YOU!

Each Manifesto was read by a native speaker in the presence of the PI (the author). Each relevant statement was marked in the Manifesto and translated into English. Native speakers were recruited among the graduate and undergraduate students at Florida International University and provided their assistance as volunteers. The PI later coded the statements to arrive at an aggregate score for each party in each issue area. Manifestos for the Czech Republic and Bulgaria were read by the PI only. PI has a reading command of these languages.

We collected and coded all party statements and promises related to the following thematic areas – childcare, gender equality and non-discrimination, parental leave, and domestic violence. We did not record the statements related to monetary support of the family (with the exception of the statements that discuss offering/increasing payments for parental leave) because these are captured by the Manifesto Project variable per503 (favorable mentions of welfare expansion). We also did not translate some of the fragments that may have described past achievements of the party in gender issues in the documents that were not machine-readable in in Croatian and Georgian manifestos. due to the limited time resources. This potentially can introduce a small attenuation bias into the measurement of the variables that measure the saliency of gender issues but this bias is negligible for three reasons. First and foremost, if the variable proves to be a significant predictor of policy positions or proves to be associated with the left/right ideological position, then increasing the magnitude of this variable will only strengthen this effect. Second, when we collected the data, the readers asked PI about any statement they were in doubt about, primarily related to the discussion of families and support for them, and many statements were actually recorded "just in case" that later were excluded from the counts of total statements related to gender issues. Finally, there were no instances in which a party would talk only about its past accomplishments in the area of women's rights without mentioning anything about the future, so the variable measures rather accurately whether or not a party dedicated at least one statement to a given gender issue. Furthermore, any general statements, even if just one, were recorded and translated.

Macrocode 1: Gender Equality.
Any quasi-sentence/statement that concerns general and specific aspects of gender equality, anti-discrimination, affirmative action, women's rights. Includes general and specific statements on gender equality in the following subcategories: general statements about gender equality and non-discrimination of women, politics, education, workplace, family, health, retirement, work-life balance, regulation of prostitution.

Sub-codes:	Description	Examples
General	Includes quasi-sentences on gender equality and women's rights and opportunities that contain no specific policy measures and cannot be attributed to any thematic category discussed below.	"Social equality between genders is going to be guaranteed. We will create material, educational & cultural conditions to guarantee equality between men and women."
Family	-equal contribution of men and women at home/in the family; -importance of women's work at home; -equal protection/treatment of spouses in the case of divorce; -marriage/pre-marriage counseling; -assistance with the care for the elderly; -support for the variety of partnership/family arrangements Excludes statements on abortions, contraception, childcare, parental leave.	1) "There is no socially responsible society without balanced contribution from and women … in family life. Males must participate more in family life." 2) "We are going to advocate for this: to create the mechanisms to advocate for and protect equality in families." 3) "When a parent stays at home to nurture children, it should be regarded as employment of civic importance and should be compensated". 4) "To strengthen the father's engagement in family and family cohesion."
Health	-access to healthcare specifically for women; -obstetrics and gynecological care (access and improvement); -preventive care, specific to women (i.e., breast and cervical cancer screenings); -contraception (excludes abortion); -reproductive health (surrogacy, STD prevention specific to women)	1) "We will introduce systematic, not nominal early prevention of breast and cervical cancer." 2) "We will provide quality protection for mothers and kids with emphasis on modern and organized networks for early detection and protection of illnesses most common in women." 3) "GROM will advocate for free contraceptive care for girls up to 18th year."
Politics	-participation/engagement in public/civic/politics life (general statements); - increasing the number of women in representative bodies, parties, governments, elected offices, leadership positions, decision-making positions (excludes business leadership); -introduction of gender bureaucracies (i.e., gender budgeting, gender issues department, etc.)	1) "To increase the share of women in politics." 2) "We will promote the social status of women through gender equality, employment, pay, entrepreneurship **and participation in political and public life"** (code only the part in bold here). 3) "Our party will energetically defend and practice the views on the insufficient representation of women in power, the state and generally in the decision-making departments."

		4) "This party, first in the republic of Macedonia, is committing to achieve real gender equality through implementation of positive discrimination s a method of increased representation of women in politics."
Education	-equality of opportunity and access to education; - equal rights in education; -non-discrimination in education; -support for non-traditional vocations for women; -raising awareness and combating gender stereotypes through education (excludes statements on raising awareness against domestic violence)	1) "Men and women should be provided equal education opportunities." 2) "Education and training which will strengthen gender solidarity, reinforce women's self-esteem and eliminate sexually oriented taboos." 3) "Equal access to education." 4) **"**We will prepare an awareness campaign to help remove stereotypes, including the choice of education and occupation."
Prostitution	-regulation of prostitution;	"The Green Party will propose a law aimed at regulating prostitution in order to prevent crime, protect human dignity and effectively combat trafficking in women."
Retirement	-counting child rearing years towards retirement and other retirement bonuses for childrearing; -sharing spousal retirement with the other spouse; -gender differences in retirement age	1) "To reduce retirement age by one year for women for every child she raises and pay a pro-rated amount based on the number of kids she raised." 2) "The possibility of reducing the retirement age by the number of children reared is currently only for women. We will strive to make it possible for men as well."
Work-life balance	-non-specific statements on work-life balance; -reintegration of parents into the labor market; -accommodations for working parents and pregnant women (flexible working hours, work from home, sick time to care for children, vacation time) Excludes parental leave statements.	1) "We are going to introduce means that will help parents to come back into the labor market." 2) "Full compensation for absenteeism due to child's disease up to 14 years of age." 3) "Parents should be able to reconcile their parental and professional roles so that they do not have to resign either to their parenthood or to their professional realization." 4) "Promoting support for employers who create jobs for mothers and fathers after parental leave and support for services that will make it easier to combine childcare with work."
Workplace	-non-discrimination in the workplace & employment; -affirmative action (special loans, opportunities, hiring practices) -fighting female unemployment; -professional development of women;	1) "We are going to advocate for this: to economically empower women; equal work equal pay." 2) "And educating women to a point of being overqualified for some jobs so they are more competitive in the business

	-support for women entrepreneurs and women in non-traditional occupations; -frightening stereotypes of mother-workers;	market." 3) "The equality of genders in employment, salaries, entrepreneurial activities." 4) "In practice, the fact is that pregnant women and mothers with young children are not equally desirable workers with many employers, especially in the private sector."

Macrocode 2: **Parental leave**
Any statements/quasi-sentences on pregnancy and childcare leave.

Father's leave	-mandatory father's leave; -engaging father to care for the newborn/child and an explicit reference to leave to distinguish it from gender equality in the family sub-code Must specifically have a reference to fathers.	1) "Maternity leave sharing possibility between parents should be more common". 2) "By various means to increase the attractiveness of parental leave for fathers." 3) "A legal weekly paid paternity leave at any time during the first 3 months of a child's life beyond the statutory entitlement to a vacation." 4) "Flexible distribution of parental leave between men and women."
Mother's leave	-extension of leave time for mothers for pregnancy/childbirth/ caregiving after birth; -increase of pay for time off while on pregnancy or childcare leave; Must specifically reference mothers.	1) "We are going to adopt the right to parental leave for all mother parents, regardless of the nature of their employment."
Both	-increased benefits/time off for childcare/pregnancy/childbirth No specific parent is referenced. If explicitly referenced both a mother and a father, code as father's leave.	1) "Parental leave is guaranteed for 3 years with pay proportion 1st year 100%, 2nd year 70%, 3rd 50% of salary". 2) "[We are going to create measures and we are going to conduct policies that will lead to the reduction of differences and bringing back the middle class]: introduction of parental leave in the legislation;"

Macrocode 3: Domestic Violence

	-any general reference to domestic violence (excludes references to human trafficking); -prevention; -raising awareness; -improving criminal and civil justice system; -victim support and services;	1) "The CSSD is aware of the duty to ensure the safety of victims of violence. In particular, women and children are exposed to specific forms of violence, such as violence in the family and between partners We will pay special attention to the reduction of domestic violence. We will create a mechanism for legal protection of weaker family members." 2) "SPS is advocating … [to] **strongly punish abuse of women.** The problem of domestic violence should become

		open, should be considered the problem of the whole society, not only the problem of the "private sphere". We will continue to strengthen the awareness and support of the victims and, if necessary, will open additional shelters for victims of domestic violence in cooperation with the local self-government and civic associations, as well as a network of counseling centers for work with the abusers." 3) "The Green Party has proposed and encourages so-called dangerous stalking to become a criminal offense."
Macrocode 4. Family Traditional.		
	-emphasis on women's roles as mothers and integral parts of the families as well as family as the union between a man and a woman; - promotion of family values and large families (excludes monetary support and incentives); -fostering positive attitude towards marriage/marital life; -raising children is the responsibility of a family; -fighting bad habits and prostitution (references to prostitution as a social evil rather than a space where women requires protection)	1) "We are convinced that the child of the preschool age should spend most of their time with their family. All other institutions are supplemental." 2) "We believe in the ideal of family and traditional values. Strong family is the foundation of people's existence." 3) "Special attention will be paid to fight drugs and to limit prostitution." 4) "To be efficient mostly at a time of crisis social policies should take into consideration women's role in development and education of children and consolidating the family."
Macrocode 5: Anti-abortion		
	-any references to ban or regulate abortions (excludes references to contraception); -any statements that abortion is not acceptable	1) "We will improve the conditions that will allow women to keep their pregnancies even in difficult social conditions (secret births, babyboxes, accelerated adoption). Administrative and judicial proceedings have to be ended, extending the way to a replacement parenthood." 2) "The protection of unborn life always remains our principle and solid position."
Macrocode 6: Pro-abortion		
	- support for a woman's right to choose abortion	1) "Contraceptions and interruptions are decided by a woman, not a politician. We protect the woman's right to make an interruption. Any suggestions that would lead to stricter regulation or prohibition of abortion or contraception are unacceptable." 2) "We will not restrict women's rights to make an artificial break in pregnancy."
Macrocode 7: Childcare		

-references to providing/improving childcare or encouraging employers and other actors (with the exception of the family) to do so	1) "Development of pre-school facilities (nurseries, kindergartens, maternity centers), whether private or self-employed. Support for company nurseries that will help to increase capacity today, in the form of tax incentives." 2) "We will strive to have enough nursery places. We also support alternative forms of childcare, such as kindergartens or children's groups, which are particularly suitable where there is a lack of classical pre-schools." 3. "We will support the provision of tax incentives and incentives to companies that provide high-quality pre-school education and childcare at the workplace. We will further support family-friendly services such as maternity and community centers, family centers, marital and family counseling, and the organization of parental care."

Macrocode 8: Family Support

-any monetary support for families (child allowances, tax reduction or credits, etc.) This excludes compensation for parental leave.	1) "We support a further increase in parental allowance because we also see the social award of parental care for future members of society. In addition to the current parental allowance of up to 4 years of age, we will be able to shorten the payment period to 3 years, so that the amount will increase in that case by at least a quarter."

Macrocode 9: No mentions. No quasi-sentences referring to any of the themes outlined above were recorded in a manifesto. If the only references were to the monetary support of the family captured by macrocode 8, then code no mentions.

Appendix 3. Key affirmative action measures and data sources

Country	Year	Policy	Measure	Data source
Bulgaria	2003	Law on Protection Against Discrimination	Article 24 (1) The employer must, at the beginning of the employment, when this is necessary to achieve the objectives of this Law, encourage persons belonging to under represented sex or ethnic group, to apply for a certain job or position. (2) The employer is obliged, in otherwise equal conditions, to encourage the vocational development and participation of workers and employees, belonging to a certain sex or ethnic group, when the latter are under represented among the employees performing certain work or occupying definite position. Article 38 The state and public bodies and the bodies of local self-government shall conduct a policy to encourage the balanced participation of women and men, as well as for the representative participation of persons belonging to ethnic, religious or language minorities in the governance and the decision-making. Article 39 (1) If the candidates for a position in the administration are equivalent in view of the requirements for occupying the position,	https://www.stopvaw.org/Bulgaria2.html
Croatia	2003	2003-07-14 (HRV-2003-L-64728) Gender Equality Act of 14 July 2003 (Text No. 1585).	All government bodies, legal entities vested with public authority and legal entities whose majority shareholders are the state and units of local and regional self-government, in all phases of planning, adopting and implementing a decision or an action, shall be obliged to estimate and evaluate the effects of that decision or action upon the position of women, and men, with the aim of achieving the full equality between women and men. Article 3: //Article 5: Gender equality shall mean that women and men are equally present in all spheres of public and private life, that they have equal status, equal opportunities to exercise all their rights and equal benefit from the achieved results.//Article 9: Article 9 1) Affirmative actions are specific privileges whereby members of a particular gender are enabled to participate equally in public life, the existing inequality is eliminated or the rights previously denied to them are guaranteed. 2) Affirmative actions are introduced on a temporary basis with the aim of achieving full equality of women and men and they are not considered acts of discrimination.	ILO

Croatia	2006	National policy for the promotion of gender equality	2.2.5. Subsidies will be provided for employment of target groups of unemployed women according to the National Employment Action Plan for the period from 2005 to 2008 and annual employment promotion plans for the years 2006, 2007 and 2008 2.3.2. Women will be singled out as a separate target group in the Operational Plan for the Promotion of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises for the current year, and funds will be provided and increased specifically for financing women entrepreneurial activities. Implementing subjects: the Ministry of the Economy, Labour and Entrepreneurship, the Croatian Bank for Reconstruction and Development Time frame for implementation: 2007 2.3.3.	
	2008	Gender Equality Act 2008 (Text No. 2663).	Article 9 (1) Specific measures are specific benefits enabling persons of a specific gender to have equal participation in public life, eliminating existing inequalities or ensuring them rights they were denied in the past. (2) Specific measures shall be introduced on a temporary basis with a view to achieving genuine equality of women and men and they shall not be deemed to be discrimination. (4) With a view to ensuring full equality of men and women in practice, the principle of equal treatment shall not preclude maintaining or adopting specific measures to prevent or compensate for disadvantages on the grounds of sex in the area of access to and supply of goods and services. Articles 9,10,11,12 The implementation of specific measures shall serve to promote equal participation of women and men in legislative, executive and judicial bodies, including public services, and to gradually increase the participation of the underrepresented sex in order for its representation to reach the level of its percentage in the total population of the Republic of Croatia. 4.2.2.-4.2.4. promotion of equal representation in government bodies 4.2.2. Pursuant to the Gender Equality Act, in appointments to state bodies, bodies of local and territorial (regional) self-government units and other legal persons with public authority account will be taken of even representation of both sexes. Implementing subjects: state bodies, state administration bodies, legal persons with public authority, local and territorial (regional) self-government units Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010 4.2.3. Even representation of women and men in managerial positions at universities and higher education institutions will be systematically promoted. Implementing subjects: the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, universities Time frame for implementation: 2006-2010 4.2.4. An analysis of the share of women in management boards of state-owned enterprises will be made and submitted to the Office for Gender Equality. Implementing subjects: the Central State Office for State Property Management, the Croatian Privatisation Fund Time frame for implementation: 2006/200	ILO

The Czech Republic		Government resolution CZE-2001-R-63368	Provides for establishment of Government Council for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Main function of Council is to draw up proposals aiming at promotion and achievement of equal opportunities for men and women. Also regulates composition (inter alia, a representative of trade unions, a representative of employers and representatives of NGOs) and internal procedures of Council. Available in English.	ILO
North Macedonia		Act of 23 May 2006 on equal opportunities for women and men (Text No. 899).	**Article 6** (1) Special measures are measures aimed towards the establishment of equal opportunities, as well as for the promotion and improvement of equal opportunities in special areas of social life. (2) The special measures from Paragraph 1 of this Article are aimed towards the removal of objectives barriers that lead to the establishment of the principle of equal opportunities of women and men or unequal status of persons of one gender in relation to persons from the other gender, as well as to give a special contribution in the form of promotion of participation of the underrepresented gender, or to remove the possibilities that contribute to unequal status based on gender. (3) The special measures from Paragraph 1 of this Article, amongst other, include: **Positive measures** which give priority, in case of unequal participation of women and men in Governmental bodies of all levels, including the judiciary, legislative and the executive, the local Government, as well as all other public services, political functions, commissions and boards, including the participation in bodies that represent the state in the international level, until equal participation is not achieved. Unequal participation of women and men exists when the representation of women or men in Governmental bodies of all levels, including the judiciary, legislative and executive, local Government, as well as all other public services, political functions, commissions and boards, including the participation in bodies that represent the state in the international level, is lower than 40%.	
	2007	The National Action Plan to Promote Gender Equality	Detailed measures and indicators in the positive promotion of women in decision-making positions Suggesting separate measures for promotion and advancement of equal opportunities of women and men in the separate areas of social life Support of women's entrepreneurship with measures of financial and non-financial support for a) making the access to loans easier, and b) developing solidarity schemes	
North Macedonia	2008		The National Action Plan for the Promotion of the Status of Roma Women (2008) Active labor market policies	

Appendix 4. List of reviewed anti-discrimination policies

Country	Anti-discrimination policies
Bulgaria	Law 2005-06-12 Regulation on the organization and activity of the Commission for Protection against Discrimination (consolidated version). Law of 27 July 2010 ratifying the amendment to Article 20, para. 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted on 22 May 1995. Law of 26 July 2012 amending and supplementing the Law on Protection against Discrimination. Law of 25 March 2015 amending and supplementing the Law on Protection against Discrimination.
Croatia	Regulations of 12 April 1996 on jobs that cannot be occupied by women. (Text No. 858). National policy for the promotion of sex equality, with the programme for the realization of the national policy for the promotion of sex equality in the Republic of Croatia from 2001 to 2005 (Text No. 1853) 2001-12-18.Gender Equality Act of 14 July 2003 (Text No. 1585). 2006-10-13 e: National policy for the promotion of gender equality 2006-2010 (Text No. 2527). 2008-05-09 Act of 9 May 2008 on the suppression of discrimination (the Anti-Discrimination Act) (Text No. 2728). Act of 28 September 2012 to amend and supplement the Anti-Discrimination Act (Text No. 2430).
The Czech Republic	Act No. 198/2009 on Equal Treatment and Legal Protection Against Discrimination (Anti-Discrimination Act).
Lithuania	Act No. VIII-947 of 1 December 1998 on equal opportunities for men and women (Text No. 80). Law No. IX-1826 of 18 November 2003 on Equal Treatment.
Macedonia	Act of 31 March 2003 to amend and supplement the Labour Relations Act (Text No. 607). Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. The 2010 Law on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination. The 2012 Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Strategy for Gender Equality 2013-2020 (2013). The Law of 28 February 2014 amending the Law on the Prevention and Protection against discrimination Act of 24 August 2015 amending and supplementing the Law on Protection against Harassment at Work.
Poland	Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 25 June 2002 on Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men. Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 3 November 2005 to suspend the Government Plenipotentiary for Equal Status of Women and Men (Text No. 1913). Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of May 16 2006, regarding the women and the military service (Text No. 660). Ordinance of the Council of Ministers of 22 April 2008 regarding the Government Authority for Equal Treatment (Text No. 450). Act of 3 December 2010 to implement some EU regulations concerning equal treatment (Text No. 1700).
Romania	Decision No. 967 of 18 November 1999 on the establishment and functioning of the Interministerial Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women. Ordinance No. 137/2000 on the prevention and punishment of all forms of discrimination, as amended by Act No. 48/2002. Law No. 202/2002 of 19 April Law No. 48/2002 (16/1/2002) On the Prevention and Sanction of All Forms of Discrimination on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. 2003 Constitutional amendment on non-discrimination. Decision No. 285/2004 on the implementation of the National Action Plan for Equal Opportunities for Men and Women. Decision No. 626/2005 approving the Statute of the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men. Decision No. 319/2006 of 8 March 2006 approving the National Strategy for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for the period 2006-2009 and the General Plan of Action related to this strategy. Emergency Ordinance No 67/2007 of 27 June 2007 on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the framework of occupational social security

	schemes (approved by Law No. 44 of 19 March 2008, promulgated by Decree No. 378 and published in Monitorul Oficial No. 227 of 25 March 2008 (page 8). Emergency Ordinance No. 83 of 4 December 2012 to amend and supplement Act No. 202/2002 of 19 April 2002 on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Law No. 229 of 6 October 2015 amending and supplementing Act No. 202 of 19 April 2002 on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.
Source: ILO	

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PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

1.Democracy and redistribution: The role of regime revisited, *East European Politics, Societies, and Cultures* (Forthcoming)
2. Affirmative gender equality policies in Central and Eastern Europe: Moving beyond the E.U. requirements, *Party Politics* (Forthcoming)
3. The official project of the nation building in modern Belarus, *Development Vectors of Modern Russia 2009*. Moscow: Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences (in Russian).

1. *The micro-foundations of democratic backsliding: A post-communist Europe's case* Paper accepted for presentation at the APSA 2020 Conference, San Francisco, CA
2. *Theorizing gender policy responsiveness in post-communist democracies*, Univ. of Lodz, Poland, February 23, 2020

3. *Protection against domestic violence: Parties or movements?* Paper accepted for presentation at the 78th Annual conference of Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL (conference cancelled due to COVID-19)

4. *Mandatory paternity leave in post-communist democracies: One step too far? The role of parties and their promises.* Paper accepted for presentation at the European Conference on Politics and Gender, Amsterdam, July 2019 (did not attend)

5. *Gender (in)equality promotion in the post-communist E.U. member states: How do parties matter?* 2019 EUSA International Biennial Conference, Denver, CO, May 2019

6. *Do left parties care about women after communism?* The Manifesto Project User Conference, Berlin, Germany, March 2019

7. *Do populist parties meet their promises to improve law and order?* 80th Annual meeting of Slavic Studies Association, Boston, MA, December 2018 (with Tatiana Kostadinova)

8. *Regime type and welfare state liberalization in post-communist countries: Does regime matter?* 76th Annual conference of Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 2018

9. *Introducing Political Science to Future Teachers.* Florida International University, Miami, FL, January 30, 2018

10. *Explaining the "explanatory" variable: Where do "strong" and "weak" national identities come from? The case of Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine.* 74th Annual conference of Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 2016

11. *Social contract of post-Soviet authoritarian governments: The cases of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan.* 73rd Annual conference of Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, April 2015

12. *Crisis in Ukraine: A Teach In Panel Discussion by FIU Faculty Experts.* Florida International University, Miami, FL. March 25, 2014

13. *The Competing Projects of Nation Building in Modern Belarus.* Annual conference of junior scholars ″Development Vectors of Modern Russia″, Moscow, Russia, April 2009