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**Title:** “Change or more of the same?  
Gender quotas and the 2016 Irish General Election”

**Abstract:** The 2016 Irish general election was the first where a legislative gender quota applied. Krook (2009) and Kenny (2013) stress the critical role that the institutional environment plays in determining the effects of equality measures such as gender quotas. An examination of women’s candidacy rates at the 2016 general election show that they varied across political parties, ranging from 30 to 43 per cent.

This paper interrogates this variance in female candidacy rates across the political parties. Drawing from interviews with political party strategists, constituency organisers and candidates, this paper explores the impact of the legislated quota on the recruitment, selection and election of women candidates in Irish political parties.

The paper is interested in assessing whether there is something peculiar to the culture of some parties that either precludes the selection of more women or prevents more women from coming forward and running as candidates? For example, did masculinised party cultures and informal rules surrounding candidate selection undermine formal rules such as gender quotas?

Anecdotal evidence suggests some women felt side-lined by their parties as party resources (financial and human) were concentrated on their male running mates. Thus the paper is particularly interested in cases where dual party tickets applied (one man; one woman) to assess were women candidates the primary or sweeper candidates?; how was the vote and constituency campaign managed?; and where were resources (financial and human) concentrated.