

FACETS OF POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN ROMANIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract: *The paper reviews the main aspects concerning the political representation of women both in Romania and the Republic of Moldova, the related influencing factors and the differences between the two states. In order to carry out this comparative case study we used main research methods as follows: desktop research and review of relevant documents, interview and statistical analysis methods. The methodology combines quantitative research, more precisely statistical analysis focused on the political representation of women from the two states at Parliamentary level, as well as on ranking of the two countries in international rankings, while qualitative research side is illustrated by the interviews conducted with two female politicians i.e. Ms. Alina Gorghiu, Senator, from Romania, and Mrs. Doina Gherman, Deputy from Republic of Moldova. Paper' conclusions highlight the fact that the Republic of Moldova ranks better than Romania in terms of political representation of women due to its legal provisions on political representation by gender quotas.*

Keywords: political representation, gender inequality, Romania, Republic of Moldova

1. Introduction

Political representation of women is paramount, since “it is a topic placed at the crossroad of several types of reflections and research works falling within the scope of political science and gender studies” (Băluță & Tufiș, 2021: 2); furthermore, this matter is also of particular importance and relevance for international relations, since women’s political participation is a vital aspect for achieving gender equality. To that end, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasises this issue in its fifth goal: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, more specifically in the target 5.5 set to “ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life” (UNGA, 2015: 18). At the same time, women’s political participation is a key element in and for a democratic regime and a priority of the European Union if we consider the Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, which encompasses the objective of “Achieving gender balance in decision-making and politics” (EC, 2024).

The starting point of research questions we aim to answer through this paper stemmed from the gender related interests of women and the link between them and women’s political representation, considering the European and international context we shortly described above. Thus, we will seek to answer the pair of questions below:

1. What factors impact the political representation of women in these states?
2. What differences stand out between the two countries?

In the first part of the paper, we carry out a statistical analysis of the political representation of women at Parliamentary level, both in Romania and the Republic of Moldova. Through the interviews we conducted, we aim at providing some answers to the two research questions mentioned above, but not only, as the respondents’ insights are extremely useful for other chapter of the work as well. In the last part of the paper, we draw some conclusions of the study based on the previous analyses, and we present the research limits and strands of action which could be approached in the future.

2. Theoretical prolegomena

The first research question seeks to find out what factors impact the political representation of women; therefore, in the following pages we present at theoretical level the factors playing an important role in that regard. One of such factors could be the perpetuation of the idea that “the sphere of politics is considered unsuitable for women since it is perceived as a corrupt and muddy environment” (Iancu, 2006: 58). The mere fact that both in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova “the political area is most exclusively maleish” (Pasti, 2003: 217), and women’s problems are not on the political agenda - since this agenda is being dominated by men issues - it should change the view according to which women cannot identify themselves with the political sphere meanings. Women’s participation in politics and not only should be fostered in order to promote their interests related to health condition, children’s related concerns or the pressing matters in education. Moreover, this should happen on a voluntarily basis and not as a result of external pressure from the European Union (Popescu, 2006: 42). The EU has agreed certain standards Romania should comply with in its capacity of EU Member State, and on the other hand, the Republic of Moldova should adopt a similar behaviour; however, in the case of the latter country, the legal and de facto transposition of these interests is necessary from the perspective of joining EU. Romania’s outcomes with regard to the achievement of the objectives set by the EU did not take long to appear. This is how the Equal Opportunities Law was adopted or the National Agency for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men was established in 2002 and on 19 December 2022 a *National Strategy on promoting equal opportunities and treatment between women and men and preventing and combating domestic violence for the period 2022-2027* was adopted by the Government. Considering all of the above, it goes without saying that the external pressures works; nevertheless, these matters could be brought to the fore in order to look for solutions as a result of some domestic initiatives taken at national level.

Furthermore, an extremely important aspect that drew our attention regarding the political representation of women concerns their interests. Women “must be represented due to the fact that they have distinct interests and life experiences, which cannot be fully acknowledged by men” (Popescu, 2004: 280). This aspect is also the starting point of this work, since there are some events that most women experience and some problems that mainly women face, and while considering them, women’ interests also come to the fore naturally. Perhaps the most edifying example that could clarify any confusion about what one should understand by women’s interests, is the one related to the experience of childbirth and its subsequent stages. There are certainly many examples, in the sense that “women’s specific interests are related to the division of labour in the public and private spheres, in the household, and in pregnancy” (Băluță, 2007: 20).

Gender related interests are twofold, namely strategic gender interests and practical interests. This classification belongs to Molyneux, and in we will try to explain below what these interests refer to. Strategic gender interests were formulated by feminists and refer to the “abolition of the sexual division of labor, the alleviation of the burden of domestic labor and childcare, the attainment of political equality, the establishment of freedom of choice over childbearing, and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence and control over women” (Molyneux, 1985: 232-233). Instead, practical gender interests emerge as a result of the jobs women have within the gendered division of labour, representing a response to a perceived urgent need (Molyneux, 1985: 233). In order not to leave room for confusion, we are ought to present the example given by Băluță through which the difference between the two types of interests is highlighted. The latter author referred to maternity leave as in Romania maternity leave is granted for a period of two years, and in the Republic of Moldova for a period of three years to ensure the mother the necessary conditions for child care, respectively the provision of financial aid. From the perspective of strategic gender interests, the two-three year timeframe has a negative impact on women’s professional career. While at home, taking care of their children and family, women face a professional stagnation; at the same time, labor market

evolves, and when women have to resume their professional activity their job-related workmanships and skills are outdated. On the other hand, practical gender interests argue that the sum of money that women receive as a result of maternity leave is a decent amount that can even meet certain needs. Băluță claims that there are situations where the financial support is more substantial than the pay women normally receive at work (Băluță, 2007: 37-38). Moving on, an important aspect that we must bear in mind is that “strategic gender interests can conflict with practical ones” (Băluță, 2007: 37). We agree with this observation, and in the light of the example presented above, we believe that this is because strategic gender interests can appear more ambitious. By this we mean the fact that women do not value the material comfort reflecting short-term benefits, but the medium and long-term gains that relate precisely to professional advancement that may be hindered as a result of maternity leave. We believe that strategic gender interests are closer to reality because what happens *after* the two to three years maternity leave period is more important than what happens during maternity leave, at least from professional perspective. Settling for a little, specifically that allowance, although that small income as we have seen in some cases may represent more than the women in question usually earn, has negative consequences for the situation of women in general. The solution we consider would be to strike a balance between the two categories of interests, so that the strategic ones reflect the practical ones and the other way around, and at the same time we no longer end up in the paradoxical situation presented by the given example, in which on the one hand, for some women maternity leave has a negative impact, and for others who indulge in their condition, a positive impact. More specifically, the way this could be achieved would be by a greater involvement of women in politics, especially of those who are prone to what strategic gender interests mean, so that later, through the leadership positions they hold, to fuel positive changes for other women as well.

3. Women in nowadays political space in Romania and the Republic of Moldova

3.1. Representation of women in Parliament – longitudinal study

Quality of a state’s democracy is closely related to the political representation of women, since “one cannot talk about a true democracy in a society if a significant part of the electorate is not represented on a steady basis” (Terzi-Barbăroșie, 2013: 11). Both in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova, women represent over 50% of the countries’ population, so in the following paragraphs we aim to analyse the state of affairs in terms of women’ political representation. Parity representation ensures equal opportunities, a core factor in the protection of human rights (Council of Europe, 2017: 9), but bottlenecks such as patriarchal values, traditions or mind-sets, on the one hand, and women’s access to education, division of household chores between partners or the imbalance between family and professional life (Expert Forum, 2021: 4), on the other hand, make it difficult to achieve equal opportunities. We reiterate that the political representation of women is an important topic, as this “has become a priority of the European Union over the last decade” (Expert Forum, 2021: 1). Considering all of the above, in this subchapter we carry out a longitudinal study in which we will focus on the composition of the Parliament in the two states starting from 1990 and up to present day.

In the case of the Parliament, it is worth mentioning right from the very beginning that there is one significant difference between the two states, namely that the Parliament of Romania is bicameral, consisting in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, while the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova is unicameral. In the Romanian Parliament, more precisely in the Chamber of Deputies, in the term corresponding to the period 1990-1992 there were elected 17 women, while in the Senate there was only one. The total share of women in Parliament during this first democratic term was 3.4%, an extremely low percentage that could be explained by the fact that this first term is the one that marks the first years of the transition from a communist regime to democracy. In the next legislature, i.e. 1992-1996, the number of women in the Chamber of Deputies decreased to only 13, while it increased in the Senate to

three female representatives. Although some progress was made in the Senate, the situation in the Chamber of Deputies led to a decrease of the total share of women present in the Parliament during that term down to 3.3%. In the 1996-2000 term, in the Chamber of Deputies there was an increase in the number of women MPs i.e. up to 25, while in the Senate it downsized to only two female senators. However, due to the increase in the Chamber of Deputies, the women representation share reached 5.5%. In the term 2000-2004, in the Chamber of Deputies the upward trend continued, reaching a total of 38 women MPs in the Parliament. The same trend was recorded in the Senate, with the number of female senators totalling 10 senators. Considering the increases recorded in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, the percentage of women reached 9.8%. During the 2004-2008 term, in the Chamber of Deputies the number of women remained constant, but in the Senate it went up to 13. Thus, the women representation' share in Parliament also increased to 10.8%. Throughout the 2008-2012 term, no more progress was made, since in the Chamber of Deputies the number of women MPs remained the same, namely 38, but in the Senate it decreased, reaching a total of eight senators. Given the setback in the Senate, the overall share of female senators also decreased to 9.8%. The downward trend did not last since in the 2012-2016 term the trend reversed and thus the number of women in the Chamber of Deputies reached 55, and in the Senate raised to 13, the total share of women members of the Parliament reaching 11.5%. In the 2016-2020 term, the greatest progress was achieved, as the total percentage reached the threshold of 18.9%, with 68 women MPs in the Chamber of Deputies and 20 in the Senate. Finally, we come to the current parliamentary term that started in 2020 and in place until the fall of 2024. In the case of this Parliament, we witnessed a downward trend in the Chamber of Deputies, where number of women reached 58, while in the Senate their number has increased and reached 25 (own calculations based on the sources available in Addendum no 1). The regression noted in the Chamber of Deputies also changes the overall situation, so that the share of women in Parliament is now 18.5%. Following the presentation of the data available for the 1990-2024 timeframe, we may notice that the political representation of Romanian women in the Parliament is overall weak because women are underrepresented in the political decision-making. This state of affairs was also confirmed by Romanian Senator Alina Gorghiu, who pointed out outdated mentalities or misogyny as possible roots of the political underrepresentation of women, but perhaps the most significant reason is the lack of gender quota legislation, which, as she also mentioned, represents a solution that led to favourable outcomes for women from other states (see Addendum no 2, answer to Q1).

Politics in the Republic of Moldova has been extremely complicated and unstable over time. In the 1990-1994 timeframe, the Parliament did not carry out its political activity for the entire term as in 1993 it dissolved itself. Consequently, in the period 1990-1993 there were 12 women out of a total of 380 parliamentarians, and a women representation share of only 3.8%. Moreover, during this term, an electoral law was adopted which decreased the number of MPs to 104. In 1994-1998 term, the number of women in Parliament decreased to only five female MPs, but the representation share increased to 4.9% as the total number to which it referred was 101 parliamentarians as mentioned. The Parliament whose term started in 1998 was in turn dissolved in 2001. In this 1998-2001 partial parliamentary term, the number of women MPs increased to nine, and the share of women's representation raised to 8.9%. In the subsequent Parliament term i.e. 2001-2005, we witnessed an upward trend, with the number of female parliamentarians reaching 16 and a percentage of 15.8%. The same trend maintained in the 2005-2009 term, with 21 women present in the Republic of Moldova's Parliament, and a 20.9% representation share. After a stable period, in July 2009 things began to fluctuate again, since after two unsuccessful attempts to elect the head of state, the legislature was dissolved, and subsequently the one inaugurated in July 2009 also failed, its activity being halted in September 2010 as a result of the same problem persisting from the previous legislature, namely the election of the President of the Republic of Moldova. Therefore, in the July 2009-2010 term, the number of female MPs reached 26 and a share of 25.7%. After this continuous

upward trend, in the 2010-2014 parliamentary term, the number of women decreased to 19, and their percentage down to 18.8%. Then, progress was made again, as in the 2014-2018 term the number of female parliamentarians increased to 20, their share reaching 19.8%. Furthermore, the upward trend continued in the 2019-2021 legislature, with a total of 26 women and a representation percentage of 25.7% (Own calculations based on the sources in Addendum no 1). Finally, we come to the current legislature that started in 2021 and for which one may notice that it adds up to a total of 40 female MPs, so the percentage of representation is 39.6%, which is the highest percentage ever recorded since 1990 until now. However, if we disregard the last legislature, we may notice that also in the case of the Republic of Moldova it can be noted that the political representation of women was weak, but unlike the situation described in the case of Romania and considering the women political representation share in the current parliamentary term, one may notice that the Republic Moldova is heading in the right direction in terms of women's political representation in Parliament. The grounds for the underrepresentation of women are similar to the ones in Romania, as one may also notice from the statements of the MP Doina Gherman, since until 2016 in the Republic of Moldova there was no provision regarding gender quotas. Things started to change in 2016, when the Electoral Code was amended by a provision in the sense that it became mandatory for political parties to have at least 40% candidates of both genders on the electoral lists. Although there was a change, it was not extremely visible, because on "the first eligible positions, namely 20-30, which were somehow secured for the party, they were occupied by men while women, all 40% of them were allocated at the end of the list of candidates" (see Addendum no 3, answer to Q1), which was a proof that this provision alone was not enough. The current visible progress is due to the amendment made to the Electoral Code, as in 2019 the double quota was introduced in the Republic of Moldova. The double quota stipulates that at least 40% of both genders should be present on the electoral lists for every 10 seats, and consequently the record share of 39.6% women MPs in the current parliamentary term is a result thereof. Deputy Doina Gherman also brought up the fact that "this provision is not only valid for parliamentary elections, but also for local ones" (see Addendum no 3, answer to Q2).

Comparing the data presented, one may notice that over time in Romania, the representation of women in the Parliament has fluctuated, recording an upward trend from the 1992-1996 parliamentary term to the 2004-2008 term. On the other hand, if we look at the situation presented in the case of the Republic of Moldova, one may notice that, despite all the obstacles arising as a result of the political instability in this state, the number of female MPs increased from 1990 to 2010. At the same time, if we compare the existing percentages in the two states until the year when the female MPs number increase was constant, the Republic of Moldova is in a more favourable position, the highest percentage amounting to 25.7%, while in Romania the maximum percentage is 10.8%. Looking at the current data, we may notice that the Republic of Moldova is also much closer to achieve gender equality, the percentage of women's political representation in the Parliament reaching 39.6%, while in Romania after a maximum of 18.9% reached in the 2016-2020 term, this figure decreased to 18.5% in the current parliamentary term (see figures in Addendum no 1). It is certain that what made the difference is the adoption of the provision on gender quotas; therefore Romania should follow the model of the Republic of Moldova in order to see improvements. For the time being, a course of action was made in that regard as Senator Alina Gorghiu together with other parliamentarians initiated two draft laws, one on "gender quotas in parliamentary elections which would lead to a representation of one third for the gender less represented", and another which establishes "a correspondence between the public subsidies granted to the political parties and the number of elected women and young people in both chambers of national Parliaments, but also in local legislatures" (see Addendum no 2, answer to Q7).

3.2. Parliamentarians from Romania and the Republic of Moldova - about the political representation of women

In addition to the quantitative analysis in the previous sub-chapter, we also used “the research interview, as a technique for obtaining “information by means of questions and answers” (Chelcea, 2004: 150) from individuals with the aim of answering the research questions from the introductory part of the work. The interview was based on a plan consisting of twofold components. On the one hand, an interview guide, i.e. an organized set of themes that we want to explore, and on the other hand, “interviewer’s intervention strategies, aimed at making up the most from the information obtained with regard to each theme” (Blanchet & Gotman, 1998: 152). The interviews were held with Mrs. Senator Alina Gorghiu for Romania and Mrs. Deputy Doina Gherman for the Republic of Moldova, as they are women involved in politics and have a consistent activity on the subject of women’s representation, which is evident from the fact that they initiated legislation to improve the situation of women in that regard. Conducting the two interviews was done differently, since in the case of Ms. Senator Alina Gorghiu, the questions were sent by email, and we received her answers in writing, through the same communication channel, while as far as the interview with Mrs. Deputy Doina Gherman was concerned, it took place online, through the Google Meet platform. At the same time, the interview guide differs in the two aforementioned cases, since the real-time conducting of the interview of the representative from the Republic of Moldova allowed for raising additional questions considering her answers. The sets of questions elaborated aimed at finding both the common denominators present in the two states, as well as the different aspects in order to be able to understand how, despite so many things these countries have in common, differences are currently noted in terms of the state of play in the political representation of women. To that end, the first question of the interview addressed to Mrs. Alina Gorghiu, and the first two questions addressed to Mrs. Doina Gherman provided the answer, since regulating gender quotas was the key element that made the difference.

Going back to the time when the political representation of women in the two states was both relatively similar and low, we tried through the interviews to find out which were the influencing factors. Mrs. Alina Gorghiu admitted that often the mother is the one who takes leave to take care of the children, and the maternity leave period of two years in which she focuses strictly on this aspect can have serious consequences on her subsequent career of the woman in question, whether it is about a political career or not. If public services for families were of quality the negative consequences of this problem would be significantly diminished. But this is only one of the solutions that can be adopted, since if “there was a clear anti-discrimination legislation and a firm enforcement mechanism” of it (see Addendum no 2, answer to Q4), when women return to the labor market things would be different. Deputy Doina Gherman also had a quasi-similar approach, yet she emphasized even more this topic related problems, claiming that in the Republic of Moldova women do not benefit from public funded nurseries or kindergartens, but only of private ones. Moreover, maternity leaves are provided for a longer period than in Romania, namely for three years, which means that “the chances of a woman who misses three years from the labor market decrease dramatically when she returns” (see Addendum no 3, answer to Q4). Moreover, the feeble political representation of women “is triggered by the existence of a large number of barriers, among which sociocultural and gender stereotypes are main factors of influence” (Ursan, 2019: 217). Both in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova, they continue to be an impediment to women’s political career as well as a challenge women are facing with. The assignment of household chores to the woman or the fact that “the woman has a <<place>> of her own, where she must remain” (see Addendum no 2, answer to Q5) represent some of the stereotypes indicated by Senator Alina Gorghiu. Gender stereotypes are also noticeable in the case of the Republic of Moldova, and Deputy Doina Gherman gave us some examples. When the current president of the republic, Maia Sandu, was running in the presidential elections, several ideas were often circulated in the public sphere: she has no family, she is a 45 kg woman, and a question was raised about what she could be able to accomplish. On the other hand, in the case of Mrs. Gherman, given the fact that she is the mother of three, her critics claimed that she is not a devoted mother as she gets

involved in politics instead of fulfilling her childcare duties (see Addendum 3, answer to the Q6). Another factor marking women's political representation is related to household related responsibilities. In the substantiation of the theoretical context, the idea that household chores have an important role in a woman's professional advancement came quite often, in the sense that their fulfilment results in a limited time for other types of activities (Iancu, 2006: 59). In Romania, more than in any other EU MS, women devote a good part of their time to household chores, which considerably reduces their ability to perform other types of work. The issue is that 46% of women, compared to 25% of men, devote at least one hour every day to household chores (see Addendum no 2, answer to Q6). The situation is not different in the Republic of Moldova either, but efforts are being made to find solutions to put an end to these problems. Deputy Doina Gherman informed us that foundations are being currently laid in the Republic of Moldova for a social legislative package intended for mothers, through which one aims to achieve wage equality, therefore the economic independence of women. This is the solution by which women will no longer be burdened with household chores, since with the achievement of economic independence, women can make decisions that do not affect their career, in the sense that they can hire a nanny for children or a woman to help them with household chores (see Addendum no 3, answer to Q5).

4. Conclusions

Following the presentation of the above aspects related to the political representation of women, we are able to claim that both Romania and the Republic of Moldova are truly two similar countries from several standpoints, and not only from the perspective of their common history. However, we should not ignore the fact that there is also a big difference between them that can be observed at the level of nowadays' political representation of women. Should we refer only to the Parliament in general and disregard the current parliamentary term, we could draw the conclusion that the presence of women in the political structures of the two states was low. However, if we include the current term, one cannot longer state the same, especially in the case of the Republic of Moldova, since a percentage of almost 40% is far from low. In Romania, the political representation of women is not even close to that of the Republic of Moldova, and according to the latest data, Romania does not seem to be heading in a direction favourable to women's political participation. This conclusion is also supported by the Global Gender Gap Index in terms of access to political power in 146 countries, where the Republic of Moldova which ranks 19th is far ahead of Romania which ranks 88th (World Economic Forum, 2023: 11). Despite the considerations above, we should remain optimistic and believe that what made the difference in the Republic of Moldova, namely the legislation of gender quotas, will eventually become the answer Romania needs and that solution will trigger the much-desired changes. As for the matter of women political underrepresentation, the influencing factors are very diverse. Whether we refer to household chores, or we talk about the gender stereotypes that women have to fight in everyday life, or if we address misogyny or outdated mindsets, we are far from exhaust them all. This mission of women is all the more difficult, the greater the involvement of religion or the mass media. Education plays an extremely important role in this overall picture, being among the few solutions by which outdated mindset could be changed and by which the negative impact of the two factors mentioned above could be mitigated. However, it is certain that women "must be among the representatives since their interests and life experiences cannot be acknowledged comprehensively by men" (Băluță, 2006: 116). This was confirmed by several aspects stated within our research, but in order to provide one last concrete example, we should return to lacking public early childhood education and care facilities so that the mother not have to limit her career path. Throughout our research we also faced certain limits: quantitative restraints due to the accuracy of the available statistical data and qualitative limits due to the low number of interviews we conducted. In the end, another aspect we would like to recall is that this research is not meant to be exhaustive, and therefore it is open for a follow-up work. In this sense, a much more in-depth approach can be undertaken

on this vast topic; however, it would be interesting to compare the two states also after the adoption of gender quotas on the electoral lists in Romania, of course, if this will become reality.

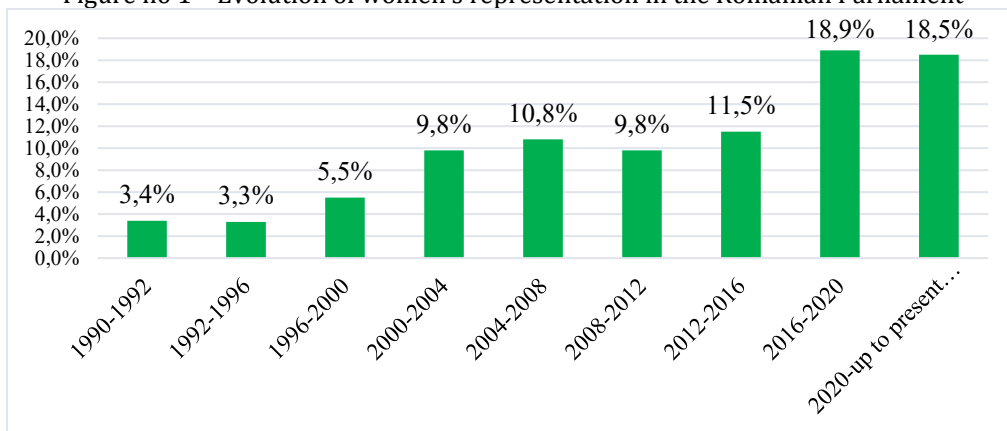
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Addenda

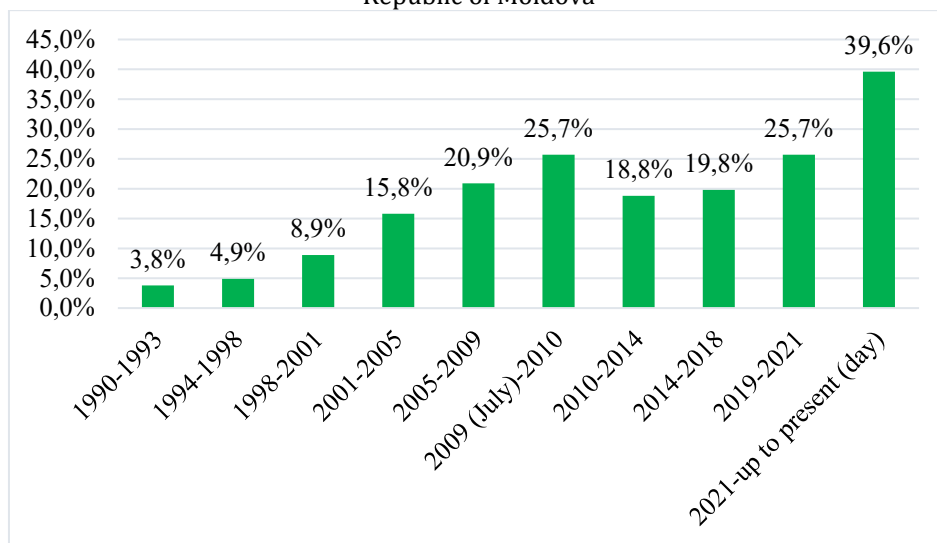
Addendum no 1: Statistical analysis of the political representation of women in the Parliaments of the Republic of Moldova and Romania

Figure no 1 – Evolution of women’s representation in the Romanian Parliament



Source: Own calculations based on data provided by the Permanent Electoral Authority (<http://alegeri.roaep.ro/>).

Figure no 2 – Evolution of women’s representation in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova



Sources: Terzi-Barbăroșie, 2013:14; Own calculations based on the data of the Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Moldova (<https://a.cec.md/ro>) and the structure of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova (<https://alegeri.md> and <https://www.parlament.md/>)

Addendum no 2: Interview Guide with Alina Gorghiu – Senator in the Romanian Parliament

Q1. In Romania, women represent over 51% of the country's population; however, they are underrepresented in the political decision-making process. What do you think are the main reasons for this state of affairs?

Q2. Are the issues that only women face being brought up by the political class? If so, how? If not, why?

Q3. What are the problems that prevent women from getting involved in politics?

Q4. Does maternity leave affect the political career of Romanian women? If so, how?

Q5. Can you provide us with some examples of gender stereotypes in relation to women in politics in Romania?

Q6. Do you consider that the involvement of women in other activities besides professional ones (household chores, raising children activities) are obstacles in their careers? What measures could be taken by the state to improve the situation of women from this perspective?

Q7. In nowadays Romania women represent 18.5% of the Parliament. What solutions could be adopted to increase their political representation?

Addendum no 3: Interview guide with Doina Gherman – Deputy in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova

Q1 After carrying out a statistical analysis starting with the parliamentary terms from 1990 until 2021, it appears that the average representation of women in the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova is 16.5%. What were the grounds for the low political representation of women in the Republic of Moldova in the mentioned timeframe?

Q2. In the Republic of Moldova, women currently represent 39.6% of the Parliament. What means were used to reach this representation share?

Q3. Are the issues that only women face being brought up by the political class? If so, how? If not, why?

Q4. What are the problems that prevent women from getting involved in politics?

Q5. Do you consider that the involvement of women in other activities besides professional ones (household chores, raising children activities) are obstacles in their careers? What measures could be taken by the state to improve the situation of women from this perspective?

Q6. Can you provide us with some examples of gender stereotypes in relation to women in politics in the Republic of Moldova?

Q7. Do you think the media has an impact in perpetuating these stereotypes?

Q8. How about religion: does religion contribute to the perpetuation of these stereotypes?

Q9. How do you perceive the presence of patriarchy?