

<b>Institution:</b> Queen's University Belfast
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 21 – Politics and International Studies
<b>Title of case study:</b> Shaping Gender Equality Legislation and Policy
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Sustained research by Professor Galligan on reforming political processes to address women's political underrepresentation in Ireland has led to new law and changed the attitudes of politicians, political parties and government on this key democratic issue. Her research had a direct influence on the <i>Electoral (Amendment)( Political Funding) Bill</i> (2011) which provides for gender quotas for candidates at Irish general elections. The research has also influenced the equal opportunities practices of Irish political parties (including Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour), thereby effecting an attitudinal change among political elites. Additionally, Galligan's research on political reform for gender equality influenced the Irish Constitutional Convention's second report to government. Internationally, it has influenced OSCE deliberations on political party regulation.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Women's consistent and persistent under-representation in politics is a feature of the modern Irish political system that has come under increasing scrutiny for its fairness and representativeness. At 15% in 2013, women's presence in the Irish parliament is among the lowest in the EU and lower than both the House of Commons (22%) and the Northern Ireland Assembly (19%). Professor Galligan has published widely on the democratic problem of women's under-representation in Ireland for over two decades, and has argued in research articles, public presentations and commissioned reports for political parties in favour of gender quotas in political and public settings as a means of addressing the persistent gender deficit in public decision-making throughout that period. The crisis in economic and political life in Ireland from 2008 onwards generated a lively public debate on political reform, one aspect of which was the questioning of public decision outcomes formulated by male-dominated decision-making arenas (e.g. parliament, government, Central Bank). This public discourse provided Galligan with opportunities to advance her analysis and solutions, effectively setting the agenda for political reform on this issue.</p> <p>Two projects in particular underpin the research driving her impact, [1] and [3] below. The research for [1] examined women representatives' experience of political life and the attitudes of women political elites in Ireland toward positive action initiatives that would assist in increasing women's legislative presence. It examined how Irish women politicians responded to various suggestions for positive action in three arenas: combining legislative and family responsibilities, funding a political campaign and getting elected. The research highlights the broad consensus among women politicians, irrespective of party, self-interest, or length of service, favouring certain positive action initiatives, as well as their reluctance to support other options. It also illustrates the complexity of implementing some of these reforms. In addition, the research emphasized how cultural expectations and values act to inhibit women's political agency. This research was conducted during 1999-2001, when Galligan was appointed founding Director of the Centre for Advancement of Women in Politics in Queen's University (2000). The research output was the culmination of a study funded by the Irish parliament. It was the first systematic research conducted on women politicians' views on the measures needed to support women's political ambitions and careers. As such, it broke new ground and provided a reasoned, objective basis for discussions between party leaderships and Galligan on reform measures they could implement to address women's under-representation. At that point, parties were strongly resistant to the adoption of gender quotas but open to implementing other measures to encourage women's political representation.</p> <p>In [3] Galligan critically evaluates the range of strategies used internationally to increase women's political representation. This research examines legislative quota provisions, pointing to their multi-faceted interaction with the electoral and political systems in which they are embedded. Different types of quotas are considered and voluntary quotas are assessed as a method of supporting</p>

women's political opportunities. Also examined is the role that organised women in civil society play in promoting gender parity. Galligan identifies the optimal conditions for increasing women's political presence: when political women, feminists within governing institutions and civil society activists coalesce to pursue this goal. This text was particularly useful in providing clarity on the different types of quota measures to party leaderships, politicians, women's sections in parties, and civil society reform advocates. It informed the discussions of the parliamentary committee investigating the under-representation of women in political life (2009) and was subsequently cited in the committee's report. The research was carried out in 2005-6, at a time when the issue of gender quotas as an instrument for increasing women's political representation was beginning to have traction within parties.

In [2], Galligan has written the standard text on women in Irish politics that is consulted by policy-makers, journalists, researchers and others seeking a definitive analysis of women's positions in Irish political decision-making. It is referenced by parliamentary researchers and senior civil servants in developing equality policies for the democratic processes. It has been revised on a regular basis (every 2-3 years) since its first publication in 1992 and thereby provides timely analysis of the subject, as well as integrating new research findings on the topic. In this document, Galligan provides the normative as well as empirical arguments for the descriptive and substantive representation of women on an equal basis with men. This research gained Galligan a place as Ireland representative and Vice-Chairperson of a 6-person expert group of the Council of Europe (CoE) in 2000, with the task of formulating a policy text on gender equality in political decision-making for Member State adoption. The Recommendation was agreed and signed by all CoE member states (45 at the time), and became Recommendation 3 (2003) on the balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making.

For item [4] Galligan secured party access previously unavailable to independent researchers and, with her research team, analysed the audit results from the Fianna Fail study. Galligan was subsequently invited to continue working with the party to develop the targeted 'Action Plan', adopted at the 2004 party conference, in which the Fianna Fail party agreed to adopt Professor Galligan's recommendation on the introduction of gender quotas for representation of party members at selection conventions. This measure was implemented by the party leadership and transformed the gender-balance of local decision-making arenas. The research and gender equality plan became a strong point of differentiation of Fianna Fail from its main rival, Fine Gael in advance of the 2011 general election as it sought to replace Fianna Fail as the major party in Ireland.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. Kathleen Knight, Yvonne Galligan, & Una Nic Giolla Choille. 2004. "Equalizing Opportunities for Women in Electoral Politics in Ireland: The Views of Women Members of Parliament" in *Women and Politics*, Vol. 26 (1), pp.1-20. This was published as the lead article in Volume 26. *Women and Politics* was the leading international journal on women and politics at that time, publishing mainly US-based research, and in print for over 25 years at that time. The journal has now changed name.
2. Yvonne Galligan. 2006. "Women in Politics" in John Coakley & Michael Gallagher (Eds.) *Politics in the Republic of Ireland*, Routledge, pp. 272-301. This contribution is included in a rigorously-reviewed collection of research essays on politics in Ireland. The editors are internationally-renowned and inclusion of Galligan's work continuously in editions since 1992 is testament to the exceptional quality of her research on this topic.
3. Yvonne Galligan. 2007. "Bringing Women In: Global Strategies for Gender Parity in Political representation" in *University of Maryland Law Journal of Race, Religion, Gender and Class* Vol. 6, pp. 319-336. This contribution was based on a paper given by Galligan at an international conference on women's participation in judicial and political arenas, organised by the Women, Leadership and Equality Program at the University of Maryland's School of Law. Galligan was invited to contribute to the conference and the Journal.
4. Fianna Fail 2004. *Independent Gender Equality Audit and Fianna Fail Gender Equality Action Plan, 2004-2014* ([www.qub.ac.uk/cawp/research/FiannaFailreport.pdf](http://www.qub.ac.uk/cawp/research/FiannaFailreport.pdf)) This report formed the basis of party reform within Fianna Fail Recommendations adopted included

gender quotas for delegates to party conventions and a party Executive of 20 persons elected at annual conference with separate panel elections for women and men. The report (and subsequent interim review carried out by Galligan in 2010) shaped the views of party leadership on supporting women's representation through quotas and other measures. It also served to distinguish Fianna Fail's policy from that of its rival parties.

#### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

"...we heard numerous arguments, particularly from Professor Yvonne Galligan, about why we should be bringing in legislation like this. As she told us, the current lack of women candidates is a serious restriction to voter choice."

(<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/seanad/2012/02/02/00007.asp>)

This statement in the Irish Seanad (upper house) was made by Senator Ivana Bacik during the Second Stage debate on the Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Bill, which went on to pass all stages on 29 July 2012 and was subsequently signed into law by the Irish President.

The gender quota provisions of the Bill (section 5) were directly influenced by Galligan's research [1,3], and, most immediately, her evidence to the Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights' sub-Committee on Women's Participation in Politics, which laid the foundations for the Bill.

The aim of the sub-committee was 'to examine the challenges facing women who wish to pursue a career in politics at local, national and European levels'. Its report was published in October 2009 and draws heavily (12 citations) on the oral evidence that Professor Galligan provided to the sub-committee on 9 September 2009 and direct references to her published work [1, 2, 3]. Galligan's studies shaped the substantive conclusions in the Joint Committee report (known as the *Bacik Report*) published in 2009, most notably its recommendation that provisions be made for a 30% candidate gender quota, rising to 40% thereafter. This recommendation was fully adopted in Section 5 of the Bill.

Additional impacts of Galligan's research on gender equality can be seen in how it has informed policy change in political parties and attitudes among the public in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and internationally:

- a) In May 2005 Galligan addressed the Irish Labour Party Commission on Women's Participation in the Labour Party. The background notes for that meeting draw on her 2004 version of the 2006 research referenced above [evidence available for confidential review]. Galligan's submission drew attention to the imposition of financial penalties on parties, and she argued that this was a strategy that could provide an incentive to political parties given the high levels of public funding supporting Irish parties. This point was taken up by the Chairperson of Labour Women, who chaired the Commission and was also legal advisor to the Irish Labour Party. She brought this idea into her drafting of the *Electoral (Gender Parity) Private Members Bill* 2009. The substance of this Bill—especially its provision for funding sanctions—was incorporated into the *Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Bill* 2011. The main architect of the *Private Members Bill* evidences this impact, noting the striking resemblance to the suggestions first presented by Galligan in the final legislative output.
- b) The impact of Galligan's research can also be seen by the fact that she was commissioned to draft an equality plan for Fianna Fáil, published as *Independent Gender Equality Audit and Fianna Fail Gender Equality Plan 2004-14* [4 above]. She was asked to conduct a mid-term review of this plan in 2008-09 which subsequently formed the basis for the current Fianna Fail Gender Equality Action Plan 2013-2018, launched in July 2013. The Audit and Review drew consecutively on her expert knowledge based on [1,2,3] above and her work for Fianna Fail significantly influenced attitudes at elite level on the measures necessary to bring more women into electoral politics. The Audit and Review are extensively drawn upon in the 2013 Plan, particularly (but not only) in the section 'Implementation Status of the targets sets out in the Gender Equality Action Plan 2004-14', pp. 27-29.
- c) In February 2013, Professor Galligan presented an expert briefing to the government-initiated 'Convention on the Constitution' on the subject of women's participation in politics/public life. She drew on [1, 2, 3 and 4] in developing the presentation. The Convention is a deliberative forum of 100 individuals tasked with making recommendations

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on constitutional change to the government by end 2013. Any recommendations accepted by government will be put to a referendum to amend the Constitution. Galligan identified article 40 as requiring a more explicit recognition of equality between women and men. The change was supported by 67% of the Convention. Professor Galligan's briefing paper, drawing on [1,2,3 and 4] is posted on:

<https://www.constitution.ie/Convention.aspx#documents>

- d) In December 2010, Galligan was invited to address the Annual Conference of the Democratic Unionist Party on 'bringing more women into politics'. Her presentation, based on [1, 2 and 3] supported the internal mobilisation of women DUP members, and at the 2011 Assembly elections the party ran 7 women, securing the election of 5 women, the largest cohort of female candidates and MLAs in its history.
- e) In March 2013, Professor Galligan was invited to address the 'Leaders Leading Change' event in Belfast City Hall which discussed ways of changing the face of politics in Northern Ireland. All parties had representatives at this conference, at which an agenda for action was formulated. Professor Galligan presented her research on gender quotas [3] along with later relevant research. She was invited, arising from this presentation, to prepare a briefing report for the Minister for the Environment on the adoption of gender-friendly measures relating to the working conditions of councillors in a reconfigured local government.
- f) In July 2013, Galligan was invited by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), comprising 57 member states, to contribute in a closed expert session to revision of the guidelines on political party regulation. Her brief was to indicate how the gender equality provisions in the Venice Commission guidelines on political party regulation could be strengthened and mainstreamed. Her policy paper, based on [3] and on additional research has been incorporated in revised Venice Commission considerations.
- g) Also in July 2013 Galligan was invited by Junior Minister and MLA, Jennifer McCann, to make a presentation to Sinn Féin women in Northern Ireland on ways of increasing women's political representation in the party. She drew on her quota research [3], and on her comparative research on barriers to women's representation [1 and 2] to provide party women with a rationale for mobilising for internal party change.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Written evidence:

Source A. Houses of the Oireachtas - Joint Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights, *Second Report - Women's Participation in Politics*, PRN. A9/1468, Houses of the Oireachtas, Dublin, October 2009  
[www.oireachtas.ie/documents/committees30thdail/justiceedwr/reports\\_2008/20091105.pdf](http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/committees30thdail/justiceedwr/reports_2008/20091105.pdf)

Source B. Houses of the Oireachtas, *Electoral (Amendment) (Political Funding) Bill 2011: Second Stage Debate*, Thursday, 2 February 2012  
<http://debates.oireachtas.ie/seanad/2012/02/02/00007.asp>

Testimonial 1. Senator, Seanad Eireann,

Testimonial 2. Research Officer,

Oireachtas Testimonial 3. Barrister, Irish

Labour Party

Persons willing to corroborate the impact:

- Chairperson , Constitutional Convention
- Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), Northern Ireland Assembly