

The subject of my research concerns the process of introducing quota to the electoral law in Poland. Currently, the minimum proportion of women or men on the electoral roll is 35% and it applies to the elections to the parliament, European parliament, councils of parishes, counties and voivodships. The sanction for not meeting the quota duty is the refusal to register the electoral list so it is impossible to run for the ticket. The change in Polish electoral law, that took place in 2011, seems to be a part of a wider international trend of implementing institutional measures which aim at increasing women's participation in politics. At the moment, 112 out of 194 countries of the world has got gender quota. It is one of the most popular instruments of promoting equality between men and women.

The objective of the project is to examine closely the history and dynamics of the Polish case. I am interested in answering the following questions: how did the legal change happen? What was the role of women and women's movement (mostly coordinated by the Congress of Women), what were the arguments of parity/quota supporters and opponents? What were the opinions presented by media experts? Finally, what are the consequences of this process for the political representation of women?

The research will contribute to better understanding of interconnections between women's movement activism (including employed discursive strategies), state institutions, wider political environment and eventual institutional change and its far-reaching effects. One of the hypothesis I propose predicts that effectiveness of the women's movement in changing the electoral law has been an outcome of the discursive strategies and arguments used in the debate, which successfully linked quotas with broader social conceptions of citizenship, equality and representation.

The research will be based on qualitative methodologies, primarily critical frame analysis and critical discourse analysis. I will analyze statements of symbolic elites concerning parity, gender quotas and women in politics, published in between June 2009 (1st Congress of Women) and January 2011 (signing the "quota bill"). I will study media publications, official documents, journalists' comments and other texts. In result, we will improve our sociological knowledge about the role of women's movement in structuring institutional order in contemporary Poland and social ways of defining democracy itself.