

**RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE:
WOMEN AND MEN POLITICIANS' EQUALITY**

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About the project

The project “Mass Media in (Re)Distribution of Power” is executed in terms of the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005). It seeks, by challenging and changing the existing stereotypes, to reach a situation when both genders are motivated and enjoy equal opportunities to participate in decision-making on issues important for the whole society. The project partners are the Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, the Danish Research Centre on Gender Equality, the Giacomo Brodolini Foundation (Italy), the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Republic of Estonia.

More information can be found at the project website: www.medijuprojekts.lv

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1. Abstract

This study “Research on Governance: women and men politicians equality” in Estonia has been conducted as part of the project “Mass Media in (Re)Distribution of Power”, supported by the Community Framework Strategy on Gender Equality (2001-2005). The study report was compiled by sociologist Tiina Raitviir.

The basic task of this study is to explain women’s participation in Estonian politics and what do women politicians as part of the political elite think about gender equality. Interviews were conducted with 14 women politicians.

The report consists of two large parts. First consists of overviews on relevant national studies and women’s situation in Estonian politics 1992-2004, and the other is an overview of Estonian women politicians’ attitudes toward gender equality and their opinions on mass media as expressed in the summer 2004 interviews. Conclusions and Recommendations are at the end of the report.

The principal finding of the study is that Estonian women do not have an equal opportunity with men to reach elected positions. The Estonian mass media are one of the central institutions that reinforce gender stereotypes in politics and the society as a whole. During the past five years an arrest in the development of gender equality in Estonia is observable in politics and other areas, the main reason being the persistence of traditional gender roles in the whole society. The Estonian top women politicians generally feel themselves to be unequal to their male colleagues, but not all of them are ready to oppose the prevailing order.

The main target groups in this study are the project partners, Estonian journalists, advertisement industry, policy implementers and government officials. As a result of the distribution of information and the training, the idea of gender equality should spread from the mass media and political institutions to the public, and the advancement of gender equality should occur faster than it has heretofore in restored-independent Estonia (1992-2004). The practical value of the study lies in that.

The following topics are suggested for discussion.

1. The readiness of EU new members’ women, especially the women politicians, to participate in EU’s future and in the achievement of gender equality (Estonia’s experience)
2. The failure to remove undemocratic gender inequality is greater among the top leaders of local governments than it is among national leaders. The larger and richer the municipality the larger is the pool of men wanting to hold office and they keep women out as if by completely democratic methods. What is to be done or thought?
3. Good and bad practices for the advancement of gender equality in politics and mass media. Advancement of gender equality is arrested in Estonia and Estonia is searching for ways to overcome it. Media should start on a mission of enlightenment and innovation, which it has not been doing lately, and politics should become more democratic, acknowledging the equality of women and men and implementing tested means, e.g., quotas, for its achievement.

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2. Introduction and overview of Estonian women's situation in politics

2.1. Introduction

This study "Research on Governance: women and men politicians equality" in Estonia is carried out under the European Commission research project "Mass Media in (re)distribution of Power". The Estonian Social Affairs Ministry is the project's administrator in Estonia. The report gives its contribution by comparing old (Denmark, Italy) and new (Latvia, Estonia) EU countries at national and European levels with respect to gender equality and problems.

The Republic of Estonia is a signatory to all important gender equality related UN and EU documents, and the Estonian Parliament passed a gender equality law shortly before becoming an EU member, as required. Mainly state institutions, foremost the Social Affairs Ministry, are involved with the advancement of gender equality, but also institutions of higher learning and several women's organisations. Political parties, who hold principal policy development positions, should not distance themselves from gender equality advancement policies, but should implement them within their ranks. Gender balanced candidates lists would facilitate the access of larger number of women to power positions and women's interests would be better represented in the country. Mass media should help along the development of the society and the change toward equality, but instead it is applying the breaks (educationally and economically).

The basic task of this work is to clarify the part played by women in Estonian politics and what do women politicians as members of the political elite think of gender equality. Sub-divisions are as follows:

- what is the share of women among the party members and the leadership, on the legislative and executive level, and what kind of problems exist there,
- are Estonian women interested in politics and do women have equal opportunities to reach governing positions and to influence decision-making at that level,
- do young people and society at large, but also the women politicians themselves, want to see more women in politics; and what do women politicians think needs to be done in order for more women to be in Estonian politics,
- what causes conflicts between women politicians and the media,
- do Estonian women politicians recognise – and to what extent - gender inequality in Estonia, and what recommendations would they make for the achievement of gender equality,
- how equal do Estonian women politicians feel when compared to men politicians

The time is right in Estonia for discussions on the topic of gender equality. No other social issue, be it the constant demographic decline or the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS, stirs emotions as much as gender equality. The discussions about integration of Russian minorities in the 1990s were equally sharp or sharper, but by now the topic has subsided.

The report consists of two large parts. First consists of overviews on relevant national studies and women's situation in Estonian politics 1992-2004, and the other is an overview of Estonian women politicians' attitudes toward gender equality and their opinions on mass media as expressed in the summer 2004 interviews.

2.2. Short overview of relevant national research

Considerable research has been conducted in Estonia on political resistance movements, the development of political parties, elections and their results, but women's role in these has been little analysed. The reason is that women's role has been modest in the development of power relations. Even academic studies about women began to pick up during the second half of 1990s and the beginning of the new century and, therefore, it has not been possible to look at everything. The topic of women and politics is, however, one of least analysed.

Women's role in politics has been studied principally by the author of this report, Tiina Raitviir. In the monograph, which appeared in Estonian and English, "Elections in Estonia During the Transition Period: A comparative study (1989-1993)", published by the Institute of International and Social Studies in Tallinn, in 1996, she studied the development of parties, elections and the parties participating in the elections, from a geographical and Estonian-Russian ethno-political aspect. The monograph included the chapter "Low candidacy by women as a problem in politics". It looked at the small share of women candidates and those who were elected, the average number of votes received by women in comparison to men, and an attempt was made to understand on the basis of pre-election questionnaires why women are kept away from politics.

Tiina Raitviir has studied numerous questions related to Estonian women and political power: women's share in legislative and executive bodies and other important state institutions (courts, legal chancellor, president), the reasons behind their low representation, the possibilities for increasing their participation in politics. These have been published in many articles (1999, 2000, 2002). Her article "Estonian Women in Positions of Power 1992-2003" appeared in *Riigikogu Toimetised* (7, 96-103) in 2003, which means that at least women parliamentarians had a good opportunity to be informed about the women's situation. Tiina Raitviir's and Külli-Riin Tigasson's jointly authored article on Estonian women's and men's participation appeared in 2004 in a collection containing information about the EU new member states (Beate Hoecker and Gesine Fuchs, compilers: *Handbuch Politische Partizipation von Frauen in Europa. Band II: Die Beitrittsstaaten*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften/ GWV Fachverlage GmbH, 23-43).

Celia Kuningas, a student at the University of Tartu, wrote in 1999 on the topic of power and women (Eesti naised Riigikogu valimistel. Rmt: Riigikogu valimised 1999. Publications of Department of Political Science. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 134-145) and Helen Biin wrote her Master's thesis in 2004 "Women's Presence in Estonian Parliament. The Influence of Political Parties. Budapest: Central European University, Department of Gender Studies.

Quite close to the present study of the 14 top politicians are the following three studies. Marion Pajumets wrote her Baccalaureate thesis in 2001 (How will gender roles evolve? Seen through the eyes of future men politicians. Tallinn: Estonian Institute of Humanities) and an article derived from the thesis (published in *Ariadne Lõng*, 2001). She interviewed young men politicians as the future political elite, asking them how they pictured young women's role in politics. It turned out that very rigidly and traditionally. The author of the interview suggested the creation of conditions for the arrival of new masculinity in Estonia. Annika Tamra, a Master's student at Uppsala University (Sweden), qualitatively interviewed Estonian Parliament's members in winter 2003 in order to find out what parliamentarians think about the nation and power (Estonian Politicians on Nation and Power. *Riigikogu toimetised*, 7, 159-168. 2003), but

the article did not have a gender aspect. University of Tartu students, under the supervision of Anu Laas, used qualitative study when they studied politically active women within the framework of the fifth stage of an EGG project (Artiklite kogumik: Eesti naised eneseteostamise võimalustest. Tartu, 2003).

It is apparent that few national studies of Estonian women and politics have been done, and the number of authors is limited. The emergence of several young scientists is a good indication.

Several scientists have written general articles on the situation of Eastern European countries in politics (e.g., Rueschemeyer, Marilyn, 2001. *Women in the Political Life of Eastern Europe: Ten Years After the End of Communism*, "Gender in Transition in Eastern and Central European Proceedings. Berlin: Trafo Verlag, 167-175; Hoecker, Beate, Fuchs, Gesine, 2004. *Politische Partizipation und Repräsentation von Frauen in den Beitrittsländer im Vergleich. Handbuch Politische Partizipation von Frauen in Europa. Band II: Die Beitrittsstaaten. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften/GWV Fachverlage BmGH, 285-306*).

2.3. Short analytical overview of governance in research context: overview of Estonian women's situation in politics

Estonia has a small population – 1,44,780 inhabitants (March 1, 2004) and the territory is also small – 45,227 km². Women are 53.9% of the population. During the last 10 years the population of the Republic of Estonia has shrunk by 10% as a result of negative growth and other causes.

Economic development is relatively rapid. The country's economic and political life is too centred in the capital, Tallinn, where 29% of the Estonia's population is located. The country's population is 68% ethnic Estonian, 25% ethnic Russian, 2% ethnic Ukrainian, 1.3% ethnic Belarusian, 1.3% ethnic Finns, and others. Major religious denominations are Lutheran, Orthodox, Baptist and other, but religion does not play a big role in peoples' lives and many consider themselves to be atheists.

Seventy-eight percent are Estonian citizens, 7% hold other states' citizenship and 15% are stateless (March 1, 2004). Estonian citizens are eligible to vote in the parliamentary elections and all legal residents are eligible to vote in the local elections. Only 79% of Estonia's population was born in Estonia.

2.3.1. Women and political parties

An overview of the political parties and ideologies

Political parties in Estonia have small membership. Only about 5% of voting age citizens are members. The average party has 4000-6000 members, and the largest ones have membership in excess of 9000. The smallness of the party is due to Estonia's small population, the short period of democracy and large number of parties, and the general view in the public that politics is a dirty business. In summer 2004, fourteen parties were listed in the registry, but six parties have been elected consistently to the parliament.

Currently there are no more political parties in Estonia that consider their major platform item to be Estonian nationality as there were during the first half of the 1990s.

Russian nationalist parties are small, with similar programmes, and marginalised. They continue to exist. Five of them are in the registry, but two are active. They are constantly in rivalry with each other, and immigrants with Estonian citizenship and their descendants prefer neutral parties at parliamentary elections, albeit dominated by Estonians. In 1999-2003, one Russian party, Estonian United National Party, was represented in the parliament.

There have never been women's political parties in Estonia and there has never been an effort to organise one.

Estonian political parties divide into centre-left and centre-right and one can be considered to hold a rightist position. It is difficult to place some parties on the right-left scale, or even on any other scale, because their platforms and activities are vague. People do not trust power, i.e., political parties, the parliament and the government. Estrangement is not yet total as evidenced by the fact that more than half of the eligible voters go to the polls.

Political activity is relatively balanced. There have been no radical parties or movements for 10 years and Communists have not once come into power. Unexpected and extreme election results, such as has happened in Latvia and Lithuania, have not taken place in Estonia. The election of the hastily organised *Res Publica* party and its populist platform in the 2003 parliamentary elections by a large percentage of voters, that made a Prime Minister of the party leader, was an extraordinary happening. Despite its populist measures, *Res Publica* turned out to be in its daily politics a rather ordinary centre-right party that began to lose its lustre under the influence of its coalition partner, the Estonian Reform Party.

Estonia differs from other European states by having weak leftist activity. Either the rightist leaning (conservatives and neo-liberals) parties have been in power 1992-2004 almost without interruption, or those with no clear ideology but with orientation toward business (Coalition Party). In 2004 appeared signs of the electorate and the general public leaning to the left. This was shown by the European Parliament elections and public opinion polls. Estonia is moving from an ideological phase to a critique-rational phase.

Different numbers of women from different parties have reached the parliament. Two factors basically determine a woman's chances of getting into the parliament – the party's desire to advance a woman candidate and the party's success at elections. The following figures show the number of women elected and their political parties during the last three parliamentary elections:

	1995	1999	2003
The Russian parties	0	1	
Estonian Centrist Party	6	5	8
Estonian People's Union	2	2	2
Social Democrats (Moderates)	1	3	2
<i>Pro Patria</i>	1	4	0
Estonian Reform Party	2	3	2
<i>Res Publica</i>			5
Total	12	18	19

In the above, the left-leaning parties are positioned at the top and the right-leaning parties are at the bottom. The Estonian Parliament has a total of 101 seats. The left-leaning parties had more women elected to the Parliament, especially from the Centrist Party. Considering that the Social Democratic fraction in the Parliament has been small, it is apparent that their percent of women parliamentarians has been relatively large. Fewer women parliamentarians have come from the right-leaning parties.

The current members of the coalition government are the centre-right populist *Res Publica*, the rightist Estonian Reform Party, and centre-left (but with an indefinite image) Estonian People's Union. In the opposition belong two left-leaning parties – the Social Democrats (formerly Moderates) and Estonian Centrist Party - and one centre-right party – *Pro Patria*.

Among *the centre-left parties* belong the clearly defined Social Democratic Party and the more indefinite Centrist Party and Estonian People's Union. The centre-left parties place greater than average importance in governmental intervention in the society, employees' interests and social protection of people. Estonian Centrist Party and the Social Democratic Party have had the largest number of women in parliaments 1990-2003.

Estonian Centrist Party grew out of Popular Front, the popular movement that was active during the latter part of the 1980s. In the 2003 elections, the Estonian Centrist Party won 28 seats out of 101 in the Estonian Parliament and seven of them were held by women. That party is characterised by being leader-centred. For the latter reason as well as for others, the remaining parties force the Estonian Centrist Party into opposition even when it receives a lot of votes at elections. The Estonian Centrist Party, and especially its leader Edgar Savisaar, does not leave the voters cold. He is either loved passionately - he has a sure support group of about 20% (see Kook, 2004, 4, for ratings) – or he is hated. In comparison to other parties, this party has the largest support among Russian voters. Due to internal conflicts the party began to break up when so-called social-liberals left. Centrist Party's rating are in strong decline.

The Social Democratic Party was earlier, under its Moderate name, in coalition with the centre-right *Pro Patria* and the Estonian Reform Party. In the 2003 parliamentary elections the party was not very popular, winning only six seats, yet it won big in the European Parliament elections (June 13, 2004), taking half of the total seats (three out of six). The trade unions are very weak in Estonia and they collaborate with the Social Democratic Party. Presently the party is on a course to success due to left leanings that the electorate has assumed.

The Estonian People's Union is well known as rural people's party (it is also called the party of the former *kolkhoz* directors), and the Pensioners and Families Party merged with it some time ago. This nationalist-conservative agrarian party considers itself to be a people's party and tries to attract - so far without success – supporters in urban areas, intellectuals and younger people. In membership it is Estonia's largest party, but it does not have many supporters. In the 2003 parliamentary elections, the People's Union won 13 seats.

Centre-right and rightist parties Res Publica, Pro Patria, and Estonian Reform Party, want less government and are interested in the individual, the economy and employers, but not the peoples' social needs.

The populist, neo-conservative *Res Publica* was a big winner at the 2003 parliamentary elections, due to people being disappointed in the old parties and naively hoping that *Res Publica* is different from the others - idealistic and ethical, meeting all the expectations of unsatisfied voters. The party won 28 seats in the parliament and the party leader Juhan Parts formed the government (see above). The European Parliament elections showed that support to the Prime Minister's party had fallen more than three-fold, due primarily to the aggressive, cultist nature of, and the negativism toward the European Union in, the campaign.

The nationalist-conservative *Pro Patria* Party grew out of the popular movement's Congress of Estonia (and the Estonian Committee) at the second half of the 1980s. Previously, *Pro Patria* was noticeably stronger and its leader Mart Laar has been twice Estonia's Prime Minister. In the 2003 parliamentary elections, the party got only seven seats. Support for *Pro Patria* is presently by 5% of the electorate. In the new and European circumstances, the image of the freedom fighter and the nationalist of the conservative *Pro Patria* no longer has the impact it had earlier.

The Estonian Reform Party has a definite image, being known as the neo-liberal economics party advancing the interests of businessmen and the wealthy. Thanks to this party, Estonia is known in Europe as "income tax hooligan" (at this party's initiative taxes were ended on profit if reinvested and the government is trying to reduce taxes altogether). Siim Kallas, currently a Commissioner in Brussels, was the party's ideologist, leader, financial wizard and also a former prime minister. The Reform Party has been in the government since its birth in 1995 and directed the country's economic policies with noteworthy success. It has a certain electorate, 14-16% of the country's voters. In the parliamentary elections of 2003, the Reform Party got 19 seats out of 101. The Party has placed some women in the government, including the current Foreign Minister, Kristiina Ojuland.

Ideologies ranging from social democratic, conservative to neo-liberal, even populist, are represented in Estonia, but feminism (like ecologism) is relatively weak. Since feminism is not too popular, politicians that support gender equality are not very eager to exhibit their ideas. And their own parties do not share their ideas and do not want to integrate feminism into their party ideology. As mentioned earlier, centre-left parties give lukewarm support to gender equality while centre-right parties give it a cold shoulder. On an individual level, one finds within a party great diversity on the question of gender equality: one can find passionate feminists in a right-wing party and their opposites in a left-wing party. Gender equality belongs among national policies since the beginning of the accession to the European Union process, but the Estonian political parties distance themselves from it as much as possible to this day.

Women as party members and leaders

In the larger, power-holding parties (represented in the parliament and the government) slightly more than half the members are women (48.1% average). When all the parties are considered the membership averages from 35% to 57% (Jan. 01, 2002 data). The rightist parties have fewer women than the leftist, and among the younger party members are more women than the average in the parties. The large percentage of women in the parties reflects women's sufficiently large interest in public issues, but

also it reflects the custom of a family joining a party. The latter may be one of the chief factors that gives gender balance to a party membership.

Although a woman is acceptable as an ordinary member of a party, she is considered not particularly suited for leadership. Presently there is no party that has a woman for its chairman. Formerly there were couple female party leaders, but these parties no longer exist. One party represented in the parliament has a woman for vice-chairman - Mai Treial of the Estonian People's Union. The 19 Estonian parties average 16% women in their leadership, but four of them have no women and five of them have only one (March 4, 2002 data). Since there are few women in leadership positions (councils, regional departments and associations), it follows that at the essential decision-making sites, including the drafting of candidates list, women's possibilities to have an impact are limited due to their small numbers alone.

The lack of gender balance in party leaderships and rejection of the principle of gender equality are the chief obstacles that prevent Estonian women from participating in decision-making and governance in politics and other areas.

The influence of parties' women's associations and other women's organisations

The six larger Estonian political parties have women's associations that are not particularly active and do not play a significant role in the life of the party or gender equality questions. At the same time their role cannot be dismissed by alleging that their existence and activities are without results. They organise training sessions, which provide opportunities for self-realisation and fulfilment, they help women to find a political identity, to develop self-confidence, solidarity and networking among women, and they apply pressure on party leaders, including the compiling of candidates lists. How well they utilise these opportunities is another question. The women's associations are faced with the risk of being pushed aside from "big politics", i.e., assigned to "women's things".

The non-political women's organisation Estonian Women's League (*Eesti Naisliit*) had a relatively large role in the area of women entering politics when it participated in the parliamentary elections during the first half of 1990s, as did many other non-political organisations at that time. The women politicians of several parties have emerged through the Women's League.

All women parliamentarians belong to the Women's Association of the Parliament (*Riigikogu Naiste Ühendus*), regardless of their party affiliation. A central task for the Association is to organise women's access to elected offices, thus opening a way for women to reach power positions. The members can apply pressure on the parties to place a sufficient number of women toward the front of the candidates list, e.g., every third candidate is a woman, to revise legislation so that the parties would be obliged to implement quotas in the candidates list. They can have campaigns "Woman, elect a woman", organise meetings with women politicians in developed democracies, and share their knowledge and experiences with other women's organisations in Estonia. While it is true that women parliamentarians have tried to promote "Woman, elect a woman" with the parties women's associations, women electors were not ready for gender equality during the latter half of the 1990s and feminist activities felt very strange.

The numerous and multi-directional women's organisations, including the regional political women's associations, have become increasingly better informed about public issues and they do not restrict themselves to home and family topics. They collaborate within a party as well as among parties, principally for the purpose of getting their representatives into municipal councils and also the parliament. Discontentment among regional women's organisations has been caused by the practice of excluding - or placing them at the end of the list, making their chances hopeless – from parliamentary elections successful and popular women elected to municipal councils. Women's organisations participate in the legislative process by sending large numbers of letters, e-mails and phone calls to the members of parliament prior to a vote on a bill affecting women. The most massive activity took place during the floor debate on gender equality legislation and during the voting.

The parties' attitude toward gender equality

The leading figures in the political parties do not recognise or place importance on the gender structure of their own parties e.g., gender considerations in membership, the size of the women's associations, the number or share of women in leadership. Being insignificant, most parties do not collect and analyse data and other information about women members. Couple parties have invited women to join their parties (Estonian Centrist Party, Social Democratic Party). If some party happens to have numerous women among their leading politicians the effect on gender balance in politics has been positive and made it later easier for other women to emerge.

The issue of gender equality is treated differently than the issues concerning the economy and society. The parties consider it secondary and it rarely requires working out a common party position.

Not all parties' programmes contain gender questions, and even less have the need for raising the gender equality questions and how to achieve it. And it would not have much significance anyway. Firstly, the parties do not follow all the points in the programme anyway. They address only a few key issues. To date, no party has emerged that considers the gender issue to be a key concern. Secondly, the need for gender equality is in the programme of those parties whose political activity is dominated by men (Estonian National Unity and *Res Publica*), while the parties, which have moved women to the top in politics (Estonian Centrist Party) do not even mention gender in their programmes.

The fact that the party's activities do not reflect the party's programme does not reduce the need for including positions on gender equality in the programme. By including gender equality requirement in the party programme, forces, whether within the party, e.g. women's associations, or from outside, e.g., women parliamentarians group, can demand implementation if need be.

Although the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia clearly prohibits discrimination, including on the basis of gender, the country lacked until 2004 a legal definition of discrimination and the legal obligation to advance gender equality and to reduce inequality. In the end, they were adopted in the gender equality statute (RT I 2004, 27, 181). It took four years for the law to be passed in the parliament (April 2004) after the government had approved it. During the whole period, the draft legislation and related questions received attention in the public. The voting on the legislation did not follow along party lines nor did it separate along gender. Party membership was nevertheless

noticeable. As expected, employers did not support the requirement for equal treatment of women and men, nor did the centre-right and rightist parties.

Most of the members of Moderates (present Social Democrats) and the Centrist Party, during whose Social Affairs ministries the legislation was in process, were in favour of the legislation, but there were exceptions. Representatives of *Pro Patria* and the National Union were either indifferent or against. Reform Party delegates were decidedly against it. They protect the interests of employers in whose opinion the restrictions affecting women in labour laws were already totally adequate. Equal pay for men and women, equal treatment of women and men in hiring, reports on different aspects of gender structure in personnel – all of these requirements were and still are very difficult for employers to accept.

The right-leaning parties (Estonian Reform Party, *Pro Patria*) probably repel women with their masculine, aggressive politics directed at the economy, where milder issues (social), values, and women leaders are not welcome. Some of the conservative parties (Estonian National Union, *Pro Patria*) explain the unequal representation of women in their leadership and elected offices by the need to conserve traditional values.

The debate over gender equality legislation in the Parliament was the litmus test, which explained many legislators', majority of whom are men, attitude toward women and women politicians. The 9th session's debates on the legislative proposal go into the Parliament's black history for their ridiculing and demeaning of women. They showed that in Estonia gender equality is not self-evident.

The public tended to treat the basic principle of human rights – equality – in extremely narrow terms, i.e., as concrete relations between men and women. Media raised the question about a need for such a law, which would not change anything anyway.

The rights exist, but possibilities for their implementation are limited. Constitutional anti-discrimination and equal rights are necessary *de jure*, but not sufficient means for guaranteeing equality between women and men. Limited possibilities cease only when in addition to rights women have real opportunities to participate in public life. In Estonia that would require actual implementation of the gender equality law adopted in April 2004, the reform of state administrative capacity, and the establishment of the watch-dog institution prescribed in the statute.

2.3.2 Women at legislative and executive power centres

Women at legislative bodies – the Parliament (Riigikogu) and local councils

Women members constitute 18.8% of the Parliament, ranking Estonia 44th in the world (June 30, 2004 data). In 2001, Estonia ranked 37th in the world with 17.8% of the parliament consisting of women (October 12, 2001 data; *ibid*). The fourth UN Women's World Congress (September 4-15, 1995 in Beijing) recommended that at least 30% of decision-making bodies, including the parliament, should be made up of women. On October 12, 2001, nine countries exceeded 30%, on January 31, 2003 eleven countries and on June 30, 2004 the number of countries was sixteen. Estonia still falls behind the recommended level as does Latvia and Italy (June 30, 2004 count).

	World ranking	% of women in parliament
Denmark	3	38.0

Latvia	34	21.0
Estonia	44	18.8
Italy	70	11.5

Having 30% or 1/3 of the seats in the Parliament means reaching a level of composition at which the number of women is sufficiently large to influence decisions. Estonia is still far from having that critical mass and considering the last two parliamentary elections, the share of women members has not changed significantly (see Appendix 1): 17.8% the 1999 elections and 18.8% the 2003 elections (Raitviir, 2003, 96-99). When one considers the 1992-2003 period of restored independence, during which the parliament has been elected in Estonia, it is apparent that the share of women has increased (Appendix 1). Nevertheless, it is necessary for women's representation in the parliament to reach 30%.

The number is high for women candidates running in local elections (2002 – 37.7%) and there is not much room for growth in the future (see Appendix 1). In contrast, the number of women candidates for the parliament is small (1992 – 13.4%, 1995 – 17.5%, 1999 – 27.0%, 2003 – 21.4%). Such participation would make it very difficult to reach the goal set by the fourth Women's World Congress (1995, Beijing), i.e., 30% women members in the parliament. Developments in Estonia are going in the right direction, but too slowly.

Men get elected to parliament more easily than women, because of certain conditions (see Appendix 2). Men are more popular among voters and they receive more votes; they are placed at the top of the candidates' list, which identifies them as potential winners and therefore the voter casts the ballot for them. A woman elected to parliament in 1992 received at an average 79.5% of the votes that were cast for a man at an average; in 1995, it was 54.6%; in 1999 it was 86.6%; and in 2003 it was 83.3%. It needs to be noted that the growth in the number of women candidates is greater than men's in comparison. Women are increasingly more interested in politics, but in comparison to men, it is more difficult for them to be elected. The difficult experience with the adoption of the gender equality law showed that equality between women and men is alien to the political parties represented in the parliament.

The present session of parliament is the 10th in the Republic of Estonia (the number includes the sessions of the first period of the Republic (1920-1940)). Estonia's parliament has 101 seats. The highest position in the parliament - the speaker - in the 10th session (when the interview was conducted) is occupied by a woman, Ene Ergma (*Res Publica*) for the first time in Estonia's history.

Women have an easier time being elected to the *local councils*, because competition for these seats is not as great as for the Parliament's. At the last two municipal elections (1999 and 2002), the percent of women elected was the same – 28.3%, while their percentage as candidates was 35.6% and 37.7% respectively (Appendix 1). Here, too, the increase in candidacy from one election to the next should be mentioned, but getting elected is becoming increasingly more difficult (Appendix 2). As for the chairman's position at the local councils, women are few: 15.4% of the chairmen of municipal councils and 12.4% of the chairmen of the township councils (January 15, 2003 count). It is noteworthy that the chairman of the largest city's council – the capital Tallinn – is a woman, Maret Maripuu.

The representation of women is average or below in the councils of the larger cities and more centralised regions, but in the smaller municipalities and peripheral towns the

share of women is larger. Although the more centralised municipalities and regions are more prosperous and innovative, these qualities are not reflected in gender equality. Because they are more attractive places, men's competition does not leave room for women. In the greater Tallinn area, which has a below average women's population, there were 7.3 candidates for one seat during the 2002 elections, while the national average was 4.7.

The influence of election laws.

To date, the parliamentary and municipal election laws appear to be neutral with respect to gender equality: an elector can vote equally for a woman or a man and the candidates lists are compiled mostly according to tradition without gender prejudice. During the parliamentary elections between 1992 and 1999, the placement toward the top of the candidates list proved to be more important for the winning women than the total number of votes received. In these cases, the decisions of the party leadership play a role: if women are placed toward the top of the candidates list, they end up being elected provided, of course, that the party does well in the elections. Since the 1995 parliamentary elections, women have lobbied within parties and across parties to have women placed toward the top of the candidates list. Analysis of the results of the elections between 1992 and 1999 showed that being placed toward the top of the list, i.e., having the party's discretion, helped women to get elected to the parliament. Had the elections depended solely on the candidate's votes received, there would have been 25% fewer women in the parliament. The election law was changed in 2002 by a sense of fairness so that the number of votes received by a candidate became more important. The election returns of 2003 indicated that the new law favoured political super-leaders, and they are the rarest species among women. In order to advance women in politics it is necessary to give more publicity to women candidates before the elections. The election law cannot be reversed and it is not being sought, because the women running for office did not like the previous law.

Radical women politicians are of the opinion that election laws do not need changing, but instead the statutes pertaining to political parties need changing. Gender quotas should be applied to all elected positions, including the election of party leaders. Such changes would be difficult to accept by many Estonian feminists and women politicians, not to mention the electors at large. An extensive public campaign that explains women are not being placed next to men for biological reasons, but because they are just as good politicians as men - if not better - would have to be conducted prior to the changes being effected in the law.

Women in executive positions – central government and local administrations.

Throughout the governments in Estonia women's membership averages 12.5%, which is relatively small (see Appendix 3). The current Juhan Parts government previously had one female member and now there are two. They are Kristiina Ojuland, the Foreign Minister (Estonian Reform Party) and Ester Tuiksoo, the Minister of Agriculture (Estonia People's Union). Although the composition of the current government is different, the experience in Estonia and other countries has been that women ministers are most often associated with socio-cultural functions and, therefore, hold the social, ethnic, cultural and education ministries posts.

Among the old members of the European Union, the percent of women in the government in 2000 was 23%, and the new European Commission has 32% women (August 2004).

It would be natural if the Estonian government had a greater gender balance with women being 30-40% of the members. That would not be impossible, because a precedent exists. Siim Kallas's government had 35.7% women (Appendix 3).

During her whole history Estonia has never had a woman for prime minister. As long as the major political parties do not have women as leaders it will not be possible to have a woman for prime minister.

Concerning the leading positions in the local governments, there are fewer women in position than in the central government. Among city mayors women are 10.3% of them, and 11.9% of township elders are women, while, in contrast, 75% of the city secretaries and 94.1% of township secretaries are women (January 15, 2003 count). Only one woman has been chosen to be the mayor of Tallinn. In Tartu, Estonia's second largest city, a woman was recently elected mayor. Periodically, a woman has been a vice-mayor in both cities.

Data shows that men desire local power, especially executive power. Executive power seems to be preferred over legislative authority and, therefore, competition in the former category is strong and women are kept out.

Women in other high national offices

The large number of women in Estonian offices is a large pool from which to advance to higher positions. Many women work in the parliament and government administrative offices (meetings department, information and business office, bookkeeping). The latter reflects working women's traditional functions – assisting men in their important work. Although more than a third of high positions are held by women, only a fifth of the very top offices are filled by women. It is quite natural in Estonia for women to occupy offices. The abundance of judges, including chairmen, in Estonia distinguishes her from the old democracies and it can be regarded as a socialist legacy, when judges received a low wage. All offices in institutions concerning the Constitution and law enforcement – Legal Chancellery, Comptroller, State Prosecutor, Chairman of the State Court, Secretary of State, Director of State Chancellery - are occupied by men.

The directors of State offices in the ministries reflect the gender related functions of the office as is also true with ministers: women are associated with socio-cultural functions. In the spring 2002, there were four women among 23 directors (17.4%) and in August 2004, there were five (21.7%). All five fill “soft” seats (social, cultural, ethnic). It does not seem likely that a woman will head any time soon a so-called masculine office – the police, investigation, rescue. Men's and women's activities and areas of work are still segregated in Estonia.

Also the position of the county elder in Estonia has been very male centred. The county elder is an extension of the central government regionally. To date there has been no woman elder in the 15 counties and at the time of writing (fall 2004, when the confirmation process for the county elders is not completed) some women candidates have surfaced. Gender balance is lacking at the top of local government offices and women are kept out.

The percentage of women among ambassadors has increased (1994 – 21.4%, and August 14, 2004 – 26.7%), but it still can be considered only slightly in balance.

The directors' positions in the ministries are filled by gender according to the function, just as are the ministers, and consequently socio-cultural functions are filled by women.

And finally, Estonia has never had a woman for president. Two women have been candidates for that high office: Lagle Parek (1992) and Siiri Oviir (1996). Neither fared well during the election process. There was no woman candidate in the 2001 presidential elections. Discussions have taken place about the possibility of having a woman for president, but it has been concluded that it is not possible. Lately, when the neighbouring countries of Latvia and Finland have had for some time very popular female presidents (Vaira Vike-Freiberga and Tarja Halonen), the idea no longer seems so strange to Estonians.

2.3.3. Young men and public opinion on women as leaders and decision-makers

During the first half of the 1990s, in several national studies of elections Tiina Raitviir disclosed what people thought about the scarcity of women in politics and their readiness to support women (1996). Generally speaking, women's participation in politics was not considered necessary or a response was not given, because the question was considered of little significance. The surprising finding was that the highly educated and highest salaried individuals, including opinion makers and younger people, responded most negatively to the question. The influx of new and young people into politics was considered far more important.

A publisher of a daily - a middle-aged man - wrote about four years ago in his newspaper that due to the make-up of their brains women are suited for remembering small things and they can carry out several tasks simultaneously. He referred to his secretary as an example. Therefore, let them work at tasks best suited for them while men do things (direct) at which they are best. Another example of the widely held view of women's and men's roles in society appeared in a daily in 1998. A young man, well known in his profession and a rector of a college, wrote that women should stop chasing gender equality and women's studies, and accept the reality of what is expected of them - give birth to children. He argued that if we focus on traditional gender roles the birth rate would increase. Incidentally, the call for young women to start producing babies was in the platform of the political party that came to power in 2003. *Res Publica*, which is dominated by young men, called for women to give birth, for men to rule the country, and order would reign.

Sociologist Marion Pajumets' interviews with young male members of political parties in 2001 (her baccalaureate thesis) disclosed unexpected and surprising findings. Most of the young men were either university students or recent graduates. These future political leaders had very conservative views on gender roles and they were individualistic. They granted women the right to work, because home and children were inadequate for self-realisation. But after a woman has given birth, she must understand that the father or the government is not going to raise the child and, therefore, she must abandon her career. The young men did not favour giving assistance to women trying to start careers. They would not invite women into politics or leading positions in the business world. These future politicians were unanimously opposed to a quota system, which would give a boost to women's participation in politics. They attributed women's modest involvement in politics to women's naturally smaller talents or interest in politics. They thought that quota systems constituted unfair competition. Everybody has equal opportunities and why should women have extra help via quota systems!

In reply to the question why Estonian women relate indifferently to gender equality issues, the young men expressed mostly the opinion that women are satisfied with the situation, because they themselves have chosen their roles. But they also opined that, as appendages to men, women are incapable of thinking independently. Another explanation was that their large workloads and economic hardships have made women too numb to do battle in politics.

The young male politicians thought that feminism is an out-dated import for which there is no demand in Estonia. Estonia is not a western country where the standard of living is high and people can fancy feminism. Here isolated feminists fight with non-existent problems, have a need for attention and appear afflicted. Feminism is perceived as an attack on male roles, or even as an attempt to establish matriarchy. In the interviews, the young men praised Estonia's own and enduring concept of femininity that Soviet equality politics could not destroy, nor will western feminism affect it.

By vilifying feminism the young men set Estonia's values against European values. At the same time, gender equality is equated with by-gone Soviet power, Communist ideology and leftist movements. Estonians share the negative associations with feminism and gender equality.

Women are scarce among decision-makers and directors as well as politicians. Why? Leading women in politics and business sought answers to that question at a businesswomen's organised seminar held at the Social Affairs Ministry on June 17, 2003. They identified the obstacles in women's path toward leadership positions listed below:

- with respect to gender roles Estonia is a very traditional country. Gender concepts from the past prevail
- mass media, education and family re-enforce traditional gender roles
- prevailing stereotyping in Estonia considers a woman unsuitable for politics and top positions
- political parties and state institutions do not address gender inequality as a priority and thereby help traditional roles to persist
- women and men have different networks and men's exist at the higher levels and have a different niche. Thus, in smoking corners or the sauna men decide among themselves whom to advance
- resources are mostly in the hands of men. During the process of privatisation in 1988-1993, many businesses went to the leaders of the Soviet era, i.e., to men
- dearth of women decision-makers (leaders) leads to wasteful practices with human resources and to decisions that are out of balance, but men as decision-makers and leaders do not recognise this or do not care due to preconceived notions or fear of competition
- often women lack husband's (partner's) support and understanding while in the case of a man it is natural for his wife and children to support him
- work and family become too heavy a load for a woman in top position
- women lack courage and the will to take responsibility; they have low self-esteem.

To date, only one comprehensive nation-wide sociological questionnaire aimed at finding out men's and women's attitudes toward gender equality, especially in business, has been conducted in Estonia (Iris Pettai and Ivi Proos, Open Estonia Society Institute, 2003).

According to the findings, 83% of Estonian women and 76% of Estonian men view men's socio-economic position, which is attributable to income and job status, in society as being higher than women's. In the opinion of women the three greatest obstacles for women are (in declining order): combining work and family, fear of risk-taking, and the need to be more capable than men in order to secure an equal position with men. Additional obstacles that were considerable: lack of women success models or their scarcity, and lack of self-confidence. Women in high positions thought that in addition to training courses, women need good child-care services, a women's network and a personal mentor in order to maintain their positions and to be better at them.

They were asked what would be the effect – both positive and negative - of greater number of women being among decision-makers? It was clear from the answers that women's self-confidence and belief in themselves would grow in society (88% of women and 81% of men respondents) and that women create more tolerance and a friendlier environment, of which there is a great lack (80% of women and 76% of men respondents). The perceived negative consequences were neglect of children (68% and 75% respectively), worsening of the family climate due to women having less time (79% and 84% respectively), and reduction of femininity due to the masculine qualities a woman in power acquires (46% and 64% respectively). The last three arguments reflect a typical traditional society's fears and prejudices.

Why are so few women at positions of responsibility in Estonia? In the opinion of the respondents among the reasons is a childhood when the notion that a woman must devote herself to home and family is internalised, the pre-conceived idea that women cannot manage a high position, and that a man is a better leader. But the study did reveal that these understandings are beginning to have cracks.

Among the respondents almost half the women (47%) and a third of men (31%) thought that there should be more women at important jobs. The women and men holding this opinion agreed with 40-60% of the recommendations suggested by the researchers to increase the share of women at high positions. Among the measures were: the implementation of the gender equality law, advancement of women via national programmes (training, funding of activities), establishment of services and opportunities to combine work and family, a more equal distribution of housework between the husband and wife, and internalisation by girls at an early age that they can become top leaders and decision-makers.

The above responses in the study showed that women and men have come to understand that there are too few women at top positions. The two sides are not at great odds about why the situation is such and what can be done to remedy it – the gap between them is generally not more than 10%. This indicates that men are not the combatants against whom women must fight. Public opinion on the whole is leaning increasingly toward the view that there should be more women at high positions and that it would be beneficial.

In the opinion of Iris Pettai and Ivi Proos society would accept women as leaders in politics before they accept them in business and as executives in local government.

However, the changes have not been reflected in election results. Women are given as few votes as before. The increase in the number of women candidates and their election to offices during the last 14-15 years is attributable chiefly to women's organisational activities and institutional factors – election laws and the political party system have been the contributors, while public opinion's role has been minor.

3. Methodology

3.1. Description of theoretical approach

This study looks at the low representation of Estonian women in politics and in decision-making places in general as wasting of social capital under conditions of very limited social resources. On an individual level, the situation impedes a woman's opportunities to develop which in turn weakens the social capital and social fibre of the country (Putnam and Bourdieu). Social networks determine a person's successes and the ability to manage in life (Bourdieu 1986). One's background and membership of relatives, friends, and acquaintances in the right circles are important. People share values and identity in the social network, and trust and solidarity exist among the members. The absence of such a supportive, helpful network would make a person an outsider. Most of Estonian women will never reach the higher echelons of decision-making networks, and if they do, their position is inferior to men's. A comparative study of Estonian women and men business leaders showed that women leaders are snubbed even within the decision-making network, largely due to their small number but also for reasons unclear at this point (Raitviir 2003). Similar practices take place in Estonia's politics.

It is very clear that keeping women from politics and from decision-making in general weakens Estonia's social fibre. Contemporary Estonia is not a country with an abundance of social capital, characterised by women and men participating at finding solutions to social problems and having a high level of trust among them. Generally speaking, participation – involvement with elections, membership in organisations, inclusion in decision-making – is tied to trust. If one exists then the other does also. The advancement of gender equality in Estonia should take place both in women's solidarity networks as well as new networks that have combined women's and men's networks.

The interviewed Estonian women politicians form a small and specialised, but nevertheless influential, part of Estonia's political elite. At least for the time being, the elite influences social development in Estonia more than the people, and the people believe more in the elite than in the state institutions. Due to their elite status, women politicians' attitude toward gender equality can influence people strongly - especially women. The women politicians occupying the highest positions are the greatest models and authority for women. The elite's power is legitimate only to the degree that the non-elite believes it to be. Whenever the elite's opinion differs too much from the people's and that of the media reflecting public opinion, the politician loses the support of the people and ceases to be an elite.

Women politicians as the elite are in an especially difficult situation with respect to the issue of gender equality when they have progressive views and a desire to change the situation. Whenever the progressive elite speaks of equality laws, western values, and facts that social scientists have gathered about gender equality, people and journalists argue in favour of traditional gender roles as evidence of Estonia's cultural continuity. In a young state like Estonia old cultural patterns prevail rather than laws based on new kinds of values, as in the case of the gender equality law.

In order to advance gender equality it would be most important to gather information from competent and authoritative individuals, such as top women politicians, and to find out how they understand, explain, interpret equality and the feeling of being equal.

In the present governance research it is understood that the women politicians' and women leaders' situation is related to the positions women have in society in general.

As a result:

- women are at a disadvantage with respect to entering politics and other positions of power – they occupy lower positions and have fewer resources, which give them less recognition and difficulties at being elected;
- women's ideals and objectives that they hope to attain in politics are more modest than men's: they are willing to carry out a role in the party rank-and-file and to be active in narrow or "soft" areas (social, ethnic, cultural); any higher position is almost accidental and more than the woman herself expected;
- politically active women accept traditional gender roles and models of behaviour and do not particularly reflect on the fact that these roles are advanced and propagated by mass media (and education).

3.2 Methods used

Obtaining information. Qualitative method was applied by using the semi-structured in-depth interview, which had as its main topic equality between women and men as seen through the eyes of women politicians.

Interviewing of politicians can be problematic, because they are used to expressing themselves cautiously. The women politicians did indeed follow, more-or-less, their "party line", but when the discussion involved equality between women and men or other so-called women's issues, which was the substance of the interview, they expressed their personal thoughts quite freely. The reason being that the Estonian political parties consider women's issues so insignificant that they don't bother to regulate them. Semi-structured in-depth interviews are not as easy to measure as questionnaires, but their advantages are that they make it possible to follow the interviewee's thought processes and questions can be explored in greater depth, resulting in a picture that is rich with nuances.

The topics and questions that were asked are given in Appendix 4. The main points according to which the questions were presented and then the interviews analysed were:

- developmental period (childhood, schools, hobbies)
- politics, including especially the entering phase
- women in important (power) positions
- gender equality in politics
- relations with mass media
- wins and losses

Although all the points are covered in the interview, the order of the questions and their phrasing may vary. Same would be true with the emphasis being placed on certain issues - that depended on the response. It is important to develop a free atmosphere in which the discussion of topics is not coerced. Although the interviewer must keep the discussion focused on the topic, the respondent may present to her/him significant issues and problems. While the latter would be outside the interviewer's framework, a good listener can sometimes obtain more information than a person who constantly asks questions.

Getting the samples. I sent e-mails to 16 women who have been politically active in recent years, including those who have been candidates in election campaigns, asking

them for an interview. I explained the objective and content of the interview, the need to interview her explicitly, and offered possible dates. After a reply, we agreed on the time and place. If I did not receive a reply within a reasonable amount of time, I sent a follow-up e-mail or telephoned. To my surprise and pleasure, I received a positive reply from all of them. I interviewed 14 of them. Two fell off, because at first, we could not find a mutually agreeable time and later they either went on a trip or a vacation.

The interviews were conducted between June 16 and July 12, 2004, and most of them at their places of work. Generally speaking, the interview lasted 75-90 minutes, but some were shorter or longer. The interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed on the computer. The names of the interviewees were replaced by coded numbers. Data about the interviewees are presented in appendixes 5-10.

The qualitative method is known in Estonia principally among scholars while the general public is used to questionnaires. Nobody has questioned the application of the personal interview with experienced and educated women politicians as an information gathering method.

This study's 14 interviewed women politicians represent all the major Estonian political parties, the different attitudes toward women's issues, different age groups, experience and length of time in politics, origin and time of entry into politics. In numbers the respondents represent a third to a half of the top women politicians in Estonia.

Analysis and generalisations methods. For the analysis of responses, I use theme analysis. Other considerations are not included.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Data about interviewed women politicians

Demographic characteristics (Appendix 5)

Age. Few – only two (6 & 9) - young ones (21-35 years). Twice as many (3, 7, 10, 11), younger middle-aged (36-50 years) and the largest number (1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 12, 13, 14) was among the older middle-aged (51-65 years). No seniors (66 and older) were in the sample. This age distribution reflects the actual situation – top politicians are generally middle-aged or older people.

Place of birth and residence. Politicians from the capital dominated just as the city dominates political and economic life on the whole. Half of the interviewed women politicians were born in Tallinn and most of them (9) live there permanently.

Marital status and children. Most of them are married (one of them cohabiting), two are single and one is a widow. It is noteworthy that the husbands of two (4 & 11) of are party leaders and in one case (11) this had extraordinary influence on her career. The rest of the mates are not in politics, at least not actively. Most of the husbands have high social status just as the women themselves.

Except for the two women without children, the sampled politicians have 1-3 children in their families. They are of all ages, including an infant (9) and a three year-old (6). Most of them are teen-agers and adults, reflecting the age groups of the women.

Education, degrees, profession and foreign languages. All the women have higher education - four of them Master degrees and one a Doctorate. The most numerous professions before political careers were in law, journalism and philology, but also represented are a career in academia as astrophysicist, an economist, actress, ceramist,

and a psychologist. Knowledge of foreign language is strong. Almost everyone speaks Russian and English and most of them speak Finnish. Fewer know German and French is the least known.

Party membership, activities in the parliament, state and local governments.

The interviewed women politicians have high political status: ten of them are members of the present Parliament and two of them in the previous one. One of them is a speaker, four of them have been ministers, and two of them have been elected to the European Parliament. With regard to political experience, they can be divided into a politician with a short period (1, 2, 5, 7, 12), an average period (3, 4, 9, 10, 11), and a long period (6, 8, 13, 14) (Appendix 6). The latter have worked in more than one parliament and have been, in addition, in the state or local governments. In Estonian circumstances, they can be considered especially experienced politicians. One of the politicians with an average period of experience was an exiled Estonian (4) and has the additional experience of having been a lobbyist in the US for Estonia's independence.

The interviewed women politicians represent all the largest political parties in Estonia - the populist neo-conservative (*Res Publica*), neo-liberal (Estonian Reform Party), social-liberal (Estonian Centrist Party), social democratic (Social Democratic Party), and the nationalist-conservative (*Pro Patria*, Estonian People's Party). Both the coalition and opposition are represented. Three of the women with a short experience period in politics (2, 5, 12) were candidates in the newly formed and successful party in the 2003 parliamentary elections and thus became members of the 10th Parliament (Appendix 6).

Many of the interviewed women are members of their party leadership, one of them being vice-chairman.

The present speaker of the Parliament is a woman (2). In the previous parliaments, one woman (8) has been the second vice-speaker. One woman (11) is the chairman of her parliamentary fraction, one (13) chairs a committee (Social Affairs), and one (14) is the vice-chairman of a committee. Half of the women are on so-called "soft" committees (Appendix 6). All the women elected to Parliament belong in the Association of Parliamentary Women, which is presently not as effective an organisation as during the previous parliament. One of the women (6) is Estonia's delegate to the Assembly of the Western European League, and several belong to other parliamentary delegations (9, 10, 12).

The work of a member of Parliament involves participation in the sessions, voting, and speaking. All the women politicians have good attendance records. For the most part, voting (yes, no, abstain, absent) takes place according to the party directive although the more experienced politicians opt for "absent" more often than the others.

Speaking shows being active, being informed, and taking responsibility. The number of times the delegate appeared at the rostrum during the 9th and 10th parliaments (Appendix 7) conforms to the rule that experienced women politicians (8, 13, 14, also 10) speak more often because they have something to say and they possess greater self-confidence. The new members and women who have lately entered politics (2, 5, 12) or those who devote their energies to something else, e.g., 2 chairs the Parliament and 6 chairs the Tallinn City Council.

Activities in state and local governments (Appendix 8). Four of the interviewed women politicians have been ministers (8, 9, 10, 14), of whom two have been at the post 2-3 times (8, 14). Three of the four had "soft" ministries (Social Affairs, Education, and Ethnic Affairs) and one had a relatively neutral ministry (Economic Affairs - formerly

Economic Affairs and Communications). Two of the current women ministers were not interviewed.

Four of the interviewees are either presently or were previously associated with local government. One of them (6) heads the work of the Council of Estonia's largest municipality – Tallinn - while also sitting in the parliament. This is an unusually large workload for a politician who is also a mother of a small child.

Participation in elections and successes (Appendix 9). A large number of them ran for the 9th Parliament (1999), all of them ran for the 10th Parliament (2003), and a large number of them also ran for the European Parliament (2004). It is, therefore, evident that all the interviewed women politicians are currently active and not cast aside former luminaries.

Election results are determined by two factors in the Estonian election system: the position on the candidates list and the number of votes received. To date, the former has been more important. As a result, one can be elected to the Parliament with relatively small number of votes (2). If one receives a lot of votes it is possible to be elected while being positioned at the end of the candidates list (12). The position on the list indicates primarily how large a voter-getter one is considered to be and, to a lesser extent, how great a worker one is expected to be. Of course, many other factors influence one's success at the polls, such as the popularity of the candidate, the party's popularity, candidate's ties with the party leaders, campaign ads, and available money.

Public activities, awards and non-political achievements (Appendix 10). The women politicians public activities are closely tied to their political activities and profession. The state awards have been received primarily for political offices and long-time services, and sometimes (5) for service in the social sphere. Membership on the boards of businesses, albeit financially compensated, is included in the public activities shown in the Table.

All the interviewed women politicians are authors of newspaper articles, they appear on TV and radio, and participate in seminars. Other activities differ among them. One of them is the author of many literary works, which have been widely translated into foreign languages, and whose novels have become objects of women's studies (1). Another is the author of numerous scholarly works in astrophysics and a leader of scientific organisations (2). Two have creative backgrounds: one participates in ceramics exhibits (3) and another is a beloved theatre and film actress (5). The journalists include the first woman anchor in an ETV's political programme (10) and the first ETV foreign correspondent in Europe and importer of the contemporary portrait interview (7). Two women have written biographies (4, 11). For several of them, politics has become a high level endeavour (6,8, 13, 14), which includes economic, legal and municipal policies.

Personal

Appearance. Women politicians' appearance and clothing are considered of primary importance by career designers, political colleagues, voters and especially journalists. Most of the interviewed women politicians have good appearance – they take care of themselves and wear attractive clothes (especially 7 & 8). At least one of them may find her career arrested by a deficiency in this area.

Public speaking. All the women politicians are good speakers and wordsmiths – they could not have become politicians otherwise. Most of them were glad to give the interview. Only one appeared to be forced into it and gave brief and to-the-point answers. Four of the politicians had extensive experience as a journalist and, therefore, had abundant experiences with interviews and presentations.

All the interviewed are *active and enterprising women*. They stand out with their sharp critical mind. The ones with the greatest experiences expressed themselves with greater self-confidence and critical thinking. As mature and successful individuals they appreciate their achievements. It became evident from the interviews that the long-time women politicians (8, 14) serve as models and authority for the others. A lack of self-confidence could be sensed in the conversations of the respondents with little political experience.

The interviewed women politicians struck the interviewer positively, on the whole.

Findings. Indirect gender discrimination continues to prevail in the leadership of the political parties. The top positions in the parties have many more men than women as if by some neutral and democratic process. Women have not been assured equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities and accountability with men.

The third sector is not yet strong enough to give voice to general interests. The lobbying by women's organisations in support of the gender equality law did not influence the Parliament sufficiently. The Parliament finally passed the law in order to remove an obstacle on the path to European Union membership.

In order to create equal opportunities for women to have access to power, theoretical ideas of social capital and social coherence should be applied.

In summation, less than 20% of the members of Parliament are women, women compose less than 30% of the municipal councils' memberships, in the economic sphere 5-15% of businesses have women in executive positions, and 10-11% of the executive offices of municipalities are occupied by women.

4.2. Findings

4.2.1. Developmental period

The interviewed women politicians are members of the contemporary Estonian political elite. The political elite of independent Estonia is very young and undeveloped. They grew up in totally ordinary or above average families. In few cases both parents had higher education, but in even fewer cases both parents had general education. Parents worked, and many of the mothers were bookkeepers. All of their families had known limited economic circumstances and it wasn't perceived as a particular problem. Most of the families had three children. Quite a number had families where father had left and mother raised the children by herself, or a step-father came into the family.

In addition to one's own family and usually the presence of a powerful grandmother they mention either some contemporary politician or friend of the family who sparked an interest in politics or social problems. All the interviewed women claimed to have been very active in their childhood and having had many interests. Many of them, who lived in the capital or some other larger town where access was easy and often free, were active in music, art, sport or the theatre. Many mention their mother as the initiator for their activities. Mothers read a lot, went to the movies and theatre. Fathers' influence was smaller.

Half or more noted that their childhood was happy and their mother (or mother and father) loved them very much. Life did not seem difficult. There were exceptions. The mother of one of the parliamentarians died when she was seven. She grew up in the country and a step-mother came into the house. Father was an invalid who was later bedridden for years and the daughter had to attend to many of the household chores in addition to her school assignments. In the summers she did heavy work in order to earn money. She got a vocational education and later an academic degree by taking

correspondence courses. Such a difficult road to big politics seems unusual even under today's conditions in Estonia. Childhood included summers in the country or in the outskirts of town where one could run freely. Ties with nature were and remain very important. For example, "I'm from Tallinn, but I love to think of myself as being from Muhu (island) where I spent all my summers. Thus I have been one of the happy children who was able to escape the city every summer and be a country girl, doing all kinds of country chores and running freely. In that regard, I am very, very happy."(6)

The interview did not explore directly whether the family had been patriarchal. No doubt, there were some. For example, "Mother was the authority at home and I think that is right, because a woman's power is in her home and father hardly ever interfered. And of course, when it came to house buying, or building, or anything concerning money that was father's realm. We had an ideal family... If father had to raise his voice couple times in his life, that sufficed."(5)

All the women politicians have higher education. Education has always been held in high esteem in Estonia. Choices were made by chance or force of circumstances. A woman who went to study journalism said, "Evidently I knew to write better than the others. But I was such a typical student with orientation toward humanities which did not leave too many choices for me."(7) If the report card was good access to higher education was easy regardless of whether you were a female or a male. In several families the children fulfilled their parents' own dreams by obtaining higher education.

The families of contemporary women politicians are smaller than their parents', but several have three children. (3, 5, 8) They don't have many children and mothers live separately. Mothers are always helpful, whenever asked. One might expect problems with housekeeping, but they do not complain about it.

A member of the European Parliament said, "I have managed by myself. My mother has helped me a lot. I have never had hired help at home, but children have been cared for and my husband has not run away with a younger women."(8) Many of the women have praised their agreeable husbands who go to the store when the refrigerator is empty (10) or can manage for themselves in all circumstances (5).

But it is not without problems, "Family and work – one or the other suffers. You can never get the ideal (balance) as you would want."(5) Most of the women politicians found that they had to manage work and family the same way as do other women with responsible jobs.

4.2.2. Going into politics and political views

Motives for entering politics have not been studied in Estonia. According to a leading psychologist in Estonia, Aleksander Pulver, three main reasons can be identified (stated in TV programme Parliament):

- 1) demonstration of oneself and desire for power in order to satisfy an inferiority complex; – parliamentarian's salary is good and provides social guarantees
- 2) mission, altruism and self-realisation.

For the most part, the reason is a combination of all three.

Other authors have presented different motivations: vanity, status, programme, mission, commitment, game (Payne, Woshinsky, 1972).

With regard to Estonian women politicians, all the above motivations were present, including the demonstration of oneself and desire for power. However, latter could be noted clearly in one-two individuals and there were no game players. Several of them needed work, most of them needed a higher wage, and vain pursuits could be satisfied. Several had personal interests with which they had been involved previously in NGOs

and, as a consequence, had become known in the public. Some entered politics out of a sense of mission and commitment to continue fighting against HIV/AIDS, stand for large families and the improvement of conditions for the disabled. Interviewer to the woman politician: “Those are individual issues that attracted them. Is that a right reason for going into Parliament?” Answer: “No it isn’t – it certainly isn’t. But behind it is pragmatism. In no way can you fight AIDS in the Parliament. NK wanted to be a boss, but she was totally unsuited for it and she became unemployed.... In another case, the person has three children and an ill husband – it’s not easy for her, I understand that.”(8) The women politicians explain their motives for going into politics as follows (the quotes are edited for brevity):

“Due to my profession (journalist) I knew about politics and I felt part of it (7, 10), and I needed work.” (10)

“While being involved with a group I began to see society’s problems, and I began to look at programmes, ran for regional office, and then for Parliament. That’s how it went - step-by-step. The good salary helped with my child’s medical treatment.”(3)

“I came into big politics via another organisation (Women’s League) and S (party leader).”(8)

“I came via IME project (transitional period’s economic plan) and S (party leader) into politics step-by-step, proving myself along the way.”(14)

“I was in politics already at high school. Already then I had a clear ideological view. Planned my career.”(6)

“In order to make a career I chose a party which had few young members, especially young women. The party’s ideology also suited me.”(9)

“Politics and women’s issues have always interested me, but I chose the wrong party.”(1)

“I came into politics via pro-Estonia lobbying in the US and also due to the influence of my husband (party leader).”(4)

“Being married to the party leader I lived in the midst of politics and it started to interest me.”(11)

“I had experienced life and work at TV also helped. I had no special interest in politics or sense of mission.”(12)

“I did not follow politics – wasn’t even interested – but it became necessary to solve certain problems, for example, policies on science, large families and disabled children.”(2, 5)

It is apparent that the women did not acquire their professions or make political decisions as a result of setting personal goals, but that outside factors were decisive, i.e., circumstances coming together. They have come into politics thanks to chance, social ties, or being recognised. Only the younger women have knowingly and deliberately shaped their careers (6, 9, and partly 7). The older women who came into politics by accident have successfully shaped their careers (8, 13, 14). A certain number of women have been brought into politics by party leaders (8, 11, 14). Two of the women are wives of party leaders (4, 11). Most of the women maintain, as if in unison, that they were invited by the party leader or some other leading member, who were mostly men. After entering the party and being successful candidates, the women have to manage for themselves, because generally speaking the parties do not get involved with the building of a woman’s career. The reason for joining a party is often the club-like activities, or in order to do something especially close to one’s heart.(2, 5, 13) Women come into politics to represent general interests and very few of them (7) have women’s interests in mind. The Social Affairs Minister has fought for women’s interests (8). Were on to consider protecting the interests of pensioners, children, large families, and the

environment then those are the issues that attracted them into politics and will continue to do so in the future.

Three major problems are apparent among the women politicians. First, while they are or were in Parliament they wish to be chairmen of city administrative divisions or some other executive position. They don't like the slow process of law making and the indecisive nature of the results. The results of executive decisions are seen faster and the results are more concrete. Parliament is the wrong place for them and it's probable that they won't remain there long. Secondly, they have arrived at the posts too fast and they don't have much of an understanding of policies and ideologies, and they do not understand society due to their education and experience. Such women politicians stick out with their lack of knowledge, because there are few women parliamentarians and ministers. They either work hard in order to catch up or drop out soon, which leads to the comment that a woman cannot handle it. The third problem is the incompatibility of a woman politician and her party. All *Res Publica* women members mention disappointments with their party.

Upon entering politics almost all the women had their family's support, including their mother's. A few of them had bosses or colleagues who did not believe in their successful candidacy or thought that they should not strive for such high positions (Parliament).

4.2.3. Women in important position

Currently there are few women in important positions, including the Parliament and the government (see 2.3.2.). Should there be more of them and if yes, what needs to be done. The general view was that there should be more of them, indeed, and the reason being their characteristics. Were there more women in politics, the latter would be less aggressive, brutal and greedy. Women bring a willingness to work together and to make compromises and there would be more deeds and less talk. Women are good workers, conscientious, exacting, but also friendly and they have greater intuition. These are qualities that have always been ascribed to women when stereotypes are presented. But more original thoughts were also presented: "were women at centres of power our country would be more stable, happy and focused on the future"(7). The argument that gender balance is important for balance in decision-making and representation of women was also made couple times. Factors that cause women to be considered for high positions included time – changes will happen in time; neighbours' examples – Finland and Latvia have a woman president; the precedent of a woman as prime minister or the president, after which the successors would have an easier time of being appointed. It was thought that a woman becoming the president is more likely than becoming a prime minister. The existence of the first woman speaker (2) shows that anything is possible.

Several women politicians said that they are ripe for candidacy to a higher office. They thought that courage and initiative are most important while knowledge and abilities they already possess. Several women were of the opinion that gender is not at all important, but that competence and political savvy are primary. They also opined that it is not right to elect or appoint a woman solely for her gender. (10, 11)

Why must women fill the "soft" positions for the most part? It was thought that although that is the practice, it need not stay that way – women can handle all kinds of

positions for which they have interest and competence. This view is somewhat baffling, because the respondents were in “soft” positions themselves.

4.2.4. Gender equality in politics

We look at women’s and men’s equality in politics in relation to important considerations, such as age, political experience, party affiliation. It is evident in Appendix 11 that a strong relationship with age and political experience did not exist, but it did in party affiliation, depending whether they represented leftist or rightist parties. The absence of gender equality recognition leads to the desire to do something in order to achieve it – to convince or explain, or suggest radical measures. Gender equality is at arrest in Estonia. What should be done to overcome it and to move ahead?

Although more than half of the women politicians consider the problem serious and they want to change the situation, only three of them are ready to pursue gender quotas. One of the leading women suggested that the parties should have gender quotas. It should be written into the law on political parties, because politics starts with the parties (8). It would be a strong agent, but there is as much, if not more, opposition to quotas as there is to feminism. Even among women that dare to call themselves feminists – and there aren’t many - are those that oppose quotas.

Quotas and feminism are concepts that cannot be ignored when you try to explain to Estonians, not to mention Estonian women and men politicians, that part of democracy and human rights are tied to gender equality and the need for gender balance. Other European countries’ experiences and recommendations are needed in this area. How different is Estonia with her patriarchal views among Eastern European countries and why is there such opposition to gender quotas and feminism? There are no answers to these questions yet. Could it be that unusual brain-washing occurred in the understanding of gender equality during the Soviet occupation or did people encase themselves with the idealism of the first independence period? Why such closed mind-sets did not take hold in other social spheres?

Do the women politicians feel themselves to be equal to men politicians? When you ask them directly the answer is yes. But how to interpret the view that all women politicians say as if in chorus: in order to be taken seriously, you have to be several times better than a man. And the other view that almost a third of the women politicians expressed was reflected in the axiom “A woman is a man’s neck and the head can be turned wherever the neck wants.” With that axiom the message is that a woman must operate indirectly in order to get her way and leave men the impression that they are the boss. A measurable reality in politics – and this can be done statistically – is that there is a lack of equality in politics. Another possibility for measuring it is by asking people’s opinions about their feelings on the subject. A clear picture is not possible on the basis of the interviews, but it seems that the women doubt their sense of equality.

What is the main agent in lieu of gender quotas or in addition to them that can be used to bring women into politics? The convinced gender egalitarian women (7, 8), and also several others, thought that women’s solidarity is the answer. Women’s organisations, political parties’ women’s roundtables, and the Association of Women Parliamentarians are the entities that can encourage other women to enter politics. The Women Parliamentarians could also hold sessions on instructing and advising the less

experienced women politicians who lack the necessary preparation for working in the Parliament and who would want to stay in politics. Another possibility would be for former major politicians to act as mentors for the newcomers. At this time solidarity among women does not exist significantly. The call for women to vote for women did not have much effect. Personal conflicts and diversity of party positions prevent a united front to work among women parliamentarians.

4.2.5. Attitudes toward mass media

The question of mass media was of interest to almost all the women politicians. All of them had experiences with the media and journalists, and these relations had strong emotional associations. In addition, several of the politicians had been journalists themselves and, therefore, the question was of professional interest. Questions about advertisements did not have the same interest and many of them had not even thought about it, although several had definite opinions about the subject.

Most of them gave a nay answer to the question whether public attention bothered them. They noted that the attention can be felt, but it isn't so aggressive that it would bother them. At the same time, their comments on the press as the principal reflector of public attitudes and their experiences with the media attest to the fact that public attention, including the media's, is not easy to bear. Only one woman politician said that public attention was a big problem. She is from a small town and country people are able to identify with her:

“Politics is complicated, because very little privacy remains, if any at all. (That is) an extremely serious problem. It seems to me that women are abused more than men... To be in the limelight, to be where the media is... I think that people who now study political science and who have studied journalism or sociology, it would be easier for them. I'm (helped in decisions) by a certain experience what to say and what not to say, how you can protect yourself, and how you are understood. Perhaps a woman is approached with a certain preconception – (a rarity) like an astronaut.”(13)

Experiences with the media had created strong negative feelings in them. It is possible that positive experiences are not remembered by people. Almost all the women politicians, even the ones that maintained media had treated them well and never portrayed them in negative light, expressed negative feelings. Only one or two out of the 14 did not have significant complaints against the media.

Gender stereotypes. The biggest conflicts with the journalists had to do with gender stereotyping – journalist having accused the politician of unwomanly behaviour.

- More than ten years ago a male journalist accused a woman politician of being an irresponsible mother. At the time, she gave birth to a child sired by a leading politician. She lived alone and did not have relatives in the area that could help to care for the child. Her mother lived in the country. She took the child to her mother's while she continued to live and work as the politician's secretary in the capital. She took the offending journalist to the European Court and won her libel case. The journalist had to apologise to her publicly. The woman politician mentioned this case in passing during the interview, wanting to forget the incident due to the pain it caused her. Her current opinion of journalism is generally positive although she said that it has ridiculed her wardrobe. Experts that have analysed

journalism say that the media has treated that woman politician quite stereotypically. The politician herself has viewed it as rather normal just as have many others.

- Few years ago a young conspicuous woman politician gave birth. When she was with her new-born in the hospital room a tabloid photographer rushed in, wanting to photograph her with her infant. She recalled how offensive that was, “I do not believe that a photographer would rush into S’s (a male politician whom heart attack had landed in the hospital) hospital room. He didn’t get his picture. I threw a pillow at him and told him to get out.” This woman politician does not trust journalists and apparently did not already before the above incident, maintaining that they describe appearances (“perhaps a little overweight”) and do not care about substance. But even less does she trust other women, who allegedly criticise her on the street, in the store, at receptions for not raising her three-year old child herself, but continues to work – and at a high position, at that! She explains, “I enjoy my little boy considerably more if I have been able to accomplish something during the day.”
- Woman politician started to live with a man who had left his family. She said, “What dirt was written in newspaper’s columns..... That was during the 1999 elections, a critical time for me. They wrote that I was a home-wrecker... a father left his children and life is so sad... the woman herself is with the Pensioners and Families Party, meaning supports family life. I’m sure it was very difficult for my children.”(13) It should be noted that the woman politician was elected to the Parliament. Journalism and society make altogether different (old-fashioned) demands on women politicians than on so-called ordinary people. It is common practice in Estonia to change partners and about 20% of Estonian families are without legal marriage - among the younger people this kind of family dominates.

The media behaves stereotypically and sets women politicians apart even when it describes women politicians’ appearance, wardrobe, mannerisms, and when photographers try to get ridiculous or compromising pictures in order to get the readers attention. Among the journalists this is considered natural and routine, but not all women politicians can get used to it.

Women politicians themselves are in the grips of stereotypes. A young parliamentarian (9) complains, for example, that she gets dirty looks when she comes to work with her infant. She wants to breastfeed him. She is very satisfied with her decision to have a child, even if the child’s father lives in the capital of the neighbouring country and the demands of the parliament are not suited for a child. Despite everything, she has a family. But one finds comments like, “Oh, a woman minister! I feel sorry for her. She’s forfeited everything... a family, children...” The woman politician expressing the view is quite progressive regarding most questions of gender equality, but even she thinks that a family and children are the most important for a woman.

Is the journalist (and via him journalism) unfair? *Pro* and *con* arguments exist. **Journalism is unfair** – let’s look at some examples.

A former journalist, recently elected to the European Parliament, found herself at a loss while being interviewed by a male journalist for a weekend supplement,

“Since this touches research on women, I’ll tell what feelings I had. I saw myself in a caricature. It was a caricature of a profession in which I had a relatively successful career. It was an uncomfortable feeling, because... the profession is in such bad hands. It is without accountability... (In his view) I am

a career woman – cold and calculating – and he came and left with that view. I felt like an object and not a subject.”(7)

A female minister, who came to office unexpectedly and was left to tackle the problems alone, said,

“(After a summer meeting where I remained to talk with people) I received a warm letter which in essence said that they were sincerely happy that the picture of me, created by the media, and reality absolutely did not coincide. My comment on what the picture wanted to convey to the public is - well, a young woman, what can you expect of her. The picture that was created of me was definitely unfair.” (9)

Journalists and journalism are not unfair; if they are, then it’s the result of making mistakes yourself.

“Quite the contrary, the journalist tried to praise – see, she can manage, she didn’t make mistakes in the numbers... I judge by the issues with whom to talk and whom to avoid. It was like that already earlier... of course, the relations changed immediately (after becoming a politician). A politician is not a good person. It’s like NK said once, that he’s become another person overnight, changed overnight.”(5)

I’ll tell you honestly, I have had luck. I have been in the press very little... and I haven’t had family matters, such as divorce, that they like to seize upon. You’ll be caught in their machine if you are flashy and talk nonsense in the tabloids. Then they’ll portray you as especially dumb.”(3)

Media has treated me relatively mildly. Only one newspaper... (a leftist paper) insulted me and two other women parliamentarians on the front page, asking if women have no mercy... such bullies, brutes and beasts... because we voted yes. It was total demagoguery... but it really made us angry. By the way, a female journalist wrote that.”(12)

“I have not experienced (bad treatment)... I’m speaking for myself. I’m inclined to think that if prior agreement is reached about the topic. I think that the different (men and women) treatment (in the media) is due to the fact that men don’t have much to say about domestic matters... They don’t talk about them, because it’s not a priority for them. First and foremost they talk about things that excite them and that’s all. But when a story is written with women about home life, then... (it’s different). (Sharper attention) on me is derived from the fact that I am a top politician’s wife.”(11)

How to regard media’s stereotyping? Positively, indifferently or indignantly? The attitudes are diverse.

“Apparently the treatment is different, but because I’m used to it I haven’t thought about it. It isn’t the most important question. But it is an interesting thing, when you think about it, that men don’t talk about domestic life (in the media). Women do (talk)... children, things... How great it would be if some man were to speak about family. I think that would make a man only better, more harmonious... if he were to talk about ordinary things. Yes, I haven’t even thought about this.”(5)

“I became a minister in 1995. In the first photo that appeared of me in the newspaper I looked like a hunchback. It was taken when I was getting out of a car, bending forward. And that has been run in many newspapers. That’s how you are paid back for your political views or whatever.”(14)

“That’s basic media approach. When it was decided to send boys (Estonian soldiers) to Iraq, all the women parliamentarians were asked (what we think)... you are mothers. No male parliamentarian was asked why you are sending sons. Such are journalistic standards whereby no journalist starts the interview – you as male politician. The approach is that women are something different... they have a defect and let’s look at that.”(6)

The roots of journalism’s production of stereotypes. Is the cause in journalists’ limitations as human beings? The demand of newspapers (and their owners), because sexism sells? The expectations of public as the consumer, because it is used to it? What to think of using a woman’s nude, sexy body on advertisements? Ads and newspapers are made mostly by younger, educated people of whom men form the majority. Where did they receive such machismo attitudes? Why does mass media behave this way?

It’s the family.

“There’s a lot of that mentality in the air and in the families, and women are too reserved to protest... The *Res Publica* (populist party) phenomenon is evidence (of young men’s machismo). But *Res Publica* is a special case. Yes, we have to speak up. Articles must be written and fuss made... In other words, one should not be afraid to attack it, because he who has ears will listen.”(7)

It’s the culture and society.

“The ads start in children’s books (gender roles). We have to start changing all that. Father also cooks and mother watches TV.”(8)

“Just as our culture today is patriarchal so is our media. Just as the political parties have women’s divisions, the media think that a woman politician is primarily a skirt, weight, and hair colour and what not. For the media a woman remains a minority.”(14)

It’s the people (consumers).

“How long are somebody’s legs. Consider how many people read *Kroonika* (yellow society magazine). Quite civilised people. I have started to measure people by whether they read *Kroonika* or not. If they read it, I say – Good Lord!”(14)

“...What can you do when 30,000 read it – that’s the print for *SL Õhtuleht* (tabloid). It shows that people have an appetite and they feed it. We don’t have investigative journalism, pardon me, but we don’t... Whenever the media notices that I’m at a reception, I am constantly on the look-out for being followed. It was that way at the President’s reception. So much noise was made about what people wore...”(2)

It’s the female journalists and journalists in general.

“Not even the women write about women’s things differently.”(8)

“The women (journalists and ad experts) are no better themselves.”(6)

“Now there are more women in journalism. They talk (write) more and maybe one can summarise by saying that what can you talk (write) about, but about other women’s clothes... What right have they to say... when I look at those journalists and how they behave... then I don’t take them seriously anymore.”(11)

“I think that the journalists don’t know (about politics) and political questions are not too interesting for the readers. Stealing or spending money gets attention... let’s say that a brainless text is understood by everybody.”(5)

It’s the owners of mass media.

“Solely. I don’t think other criteria apply. Perhaps somewhere ethics sometimes play a role, but not always. For the most part it’s purely commercial... (Foreign) owners unfortunately say that it doesn’t sell and nobody is interested in it.”(12)

It’s something else.

“I don’t know. Apparently sociologists or psychologists or somebody has convinced ad agents that eroticism sells... I have already felt for some time that something needs to be done.”(12)

Possibilities for journalism to change.

Can a woman politician do something to the journalist?

“I’ll give you a good example. One of world’s greatest tennis players, Martina Navratilova, who has an acknowledged sexual orientation, said... that there are many homosexual male tennis players, but no journalist will make an issue of it because he knows he will get punched in the mouth.”(2)

“I’m not thinking of revenge, but of a way to remove him as a lecturer on journalistic ethics at the University of Tartu. No doubt, that in that area his thinking is bad. He cannot teach the subject while using such tactics.”(7)

One person cannot oppose mass media.

“It’s time to (change)... but am I going to attack it? Next time he’ll write in the paper that I attacked him. We politicians can hardly educate the media. If media can educate itself and if society can do it, I’ll tip my hat to such a society. But as long as scandals sell you cannot make a dent in it.”(14)

“Let’s start with the question why women go along with it (gender stereotypes). In Estonia the media either makes you a politician or does not. I could never be a politician if the media does not show me. Whether I’m a politician or not to the people depends on the media. Therefore, you would be a fool or a very self-confident person if you get into conflict with the media. And who can withstand that? Who has such strength?”(14)

Journalism can be changed if women journalists were to decide upon it.

“Women journalists should raise their voice at editorial meetings. They should... show that content analysis talks about it (gender equality). And women politicians and all women in decision-making bodies should try to understand what the journalist is doing and not to answer those (stereotype-leading) questions, but ask what does that have to do with the issue at hand – I’m talking to you about my mission... Or make it clear at the outset that we will not talk about hairdressers, cosmetics and housework. Do we have other topics to discuss? And if so, then let’s begin.”(7)

Journalists and ad experts have to be educated.

“I don’t believe that a person is smarter, or has changed, after being taught one day... But I do think that a person learns all the time. He constantly acquires new knowledge... a person revises his understandings and values. I notice how much more tolerant I have become.”(6)

“In one way I’m a realist, but also a hopeless optimist. I continue to hope that ultimately sober thinking and goodness win. And as far as I’m concerned one has to continue working toward that end.”(4)

Women’s thinking has to change. The old axiom that a woman is the neck that turns a man’s head surfaced in the interviews and several women politicians referred to it in all seriousness and in a positive context.

“As long as the neck mentality persists – that a woman... freely announces that she is the neck when in reality she is that man’s brains, then there isn’t much hope.”(7)

Society has to develop.

“The exploitation of a woman’s role or body and all that... You will not buy, you will ignore, you will come on the street and announce that you will not buy such tastelessly advertised products. Society... can make (changes), but our society is not yet mature enough.”(3)

Time changes – or not?

“I think that people later realise their stupidities. In time things will change for us just as in other parts of the world it has more-or-less happened.”(6)

“We have to change (journalism). No doubt, it will change itself (too), but very slowly.”(9)

“Nothing changes by itself. Who’s going to change it (journalism)? If you don’t try to change anything then there is no meaning... Everything starts with education, family and when change starts then other things begin to be affected, and most importantly – the way of thinking.”(8)

Not changing society, but hoping on the young – they will make the changes.

“But I’m an optimist, my hope is in the young. European Union is open, young men and women move around and do not communicate in Estonian. Machismo behaviour does not work there. To tell the truth, young people know that it isn’t smart (to sell ravioli) with women’s breasts. The understanding has to be in the air. React whenever a double-edged ad appears.”(7)

“Maybe among the younger people... I look at my own children and how many things are more natural in their families than they were for us. Not that my husband would not do it, but... I can do it faster than I can say why don’t you do it, too! It (changes) take time. But in order not to wait centuries we have to start with the changes in kindergarten (and school)...”(8)

“... Changes can be seen with the children... what did two (little) boys start to do? They started to play house and cook food... I do believe it when I observe how things have changed in kindergarten and schools. It gives hope. A lot depends on what kind of trends are created.”(6)

Women politicians expect understanding and support from journalism, but do not get it for the most part.

“Public and the media could be more supportive (so that there would be more women politicians)... I still think that such public and media support would be the best kind of support. If the woman is portrayed as clumsy, or ridiculed... (In any event)... a woman will vote for a man rather than a woman (at elections). We don't have women voting for women yet, but public can help (to change the situation).”(13)

4.2.6. Wins and losses

Women politicians are unanimous in the opinion that their political careers mean victories and losses are minor next to it. Their career as top politicians means to many of them increased economic well-being, a rise in social status, self-realisation and satisfaction over successes. Life has been interesting – they have travelled, experienced and learned a lot – and it doesn't matter that it's been difficult.

Loss of privacy (2, 13, 6 emphasised that) has to be counted among the losses and difficulties. A lot of time has been spent on politics and the question occurs whether it would not have been wiser to spend the time on something else, like earn an academic degree or give birth to another child (11). Discussions took place over the fact that if one's political career ceases, can one fall back on being a lawyer or a journalist? There was concern that the political background would be a hindrance and one cannot go back. Many of them felt that they would still have their profession, family, friends even if they have to leave politics behind. They would not have lost anything, because nobody can take the experiences from them.

Wins outweighed the losses in all cases.

5. Conclusions

A society in which women and men can not equally realise their full potential is not capable of being developed, socially secure, competitive and sustainable. Thus Estonia's sustainability depends on which values are to mould relations between women and men – power and subjugation or partnership and collaboration between equals. It cannot be said in contemporary Estonia that gender equality is universally considered to be beneficial and measures for its advancements are known.

Almost half of the members of the **political parties in the Parliament** are women, yet among party leaderships and heads of sub-divisions can be found 15-20% women. And no political party has a woman as chairman. Consequently, it is not possible for Estonia to have a woman as Prime Minister (there has never been one). The parties rarely turn attention to developing a woman politician's career. Only a few young women politicians have built their own careers. According to the women politicians, they have almost by accident entered politics at the invitation of a leading party figure. Some of them have not even been interested in politics before finding themselves in the Parliament.

During 1992-2004 the share of women increased in **legislative and executive positions**, but it has become arrested during the last five years. In order to have their interests represented women should constitute 30% or more of the entity, but there is 20% in the Parliament, less than 30% (28.3%) in municipal councils, and below 15% in the government (one government did have 35.7%). **Appointed higher offices** are held by men. In 2003 Estonia got a female Speaker of Parliament for the first time. Estonia has never had a woman for President, but the possibility for one to be elected has been increased by the examples from neighbouring Finland and Latvia.

Executive power is appreciated more than legislative power in Estonia and it is in the former that competition among politicians is stronger, making access for women even more difficult. Women are fiercely denied top positions at **municipal offices** and consequently, very few mayors and township elders are women - 10.3% and 11.9% (2003) respectively. Those percentages are lower than the ones found in the state government. The more populous and advantageously located the municipality the more difficult it is for women to participate as decision-makers.

Women are becoming increasingly **interested in politics**. The number of women candidates has increased more rapidly than men candidates (Appendix 2). Despite this development the small share of women candidates is still a problem. **It is more difficult for women to be elected**, because there are few women placed among the top twenty on the candidates list, and there are few of them at high party positions, the factions and committees of the Parliament and municipal councils – especially in chairmanships. Voters prefer men politicians at elections, because public awareness about the need for equal participation by women and men at decision-making is lacking, a woman is not considered equal to a man in politics, and the influence of women's organisations is still weak. Women and men do not have equal opportunities to reach elected offices.

Women's influence on policies is one-dimensional due to the stereotypical association that assigns the "soft" - social, cultural and ethnic affairs - for them in the Parliament, government, ministries, and municipalities. Majority of the women politicians, including those who are involved with social questions, were opposed to strong segregation of policy spheres between women and men.

According to an analysis of **public opinion** in 2003, 83% of Estonian women and 76% of Estonian men consider men's socio-economic position to be better than the women's in the society. Among those polled, almost half (47%) of the women and almost a third (31%) of the men thought that there should be more women in important offices. It is not possible to say that there has been an increase in the numbers of people who want to see women in politics and in high office in general, because the results of earlier polls and the 2003 one cannot be easily compared. The interviews with women politicians showed that many of them expect stereotypes to be shattered in the future by the younger generation. The qualitative study of young men politicians in 2001 ascertained that the majority of young men politicians are in the grips of stereotypes and opposed to women being in politics – the masculine nature of politics supposedly being unsuited for women. A gender equality breakthrough cannot be expected in Estonia if things continue as they have been and no radical measures are taken.

The women politicians break into four categories by their attitudes toward gender equality: 1) deniers – gender inequality does not exist, because she has not experienced it; 2) doubters – some problems probably exist with gender equality, but they are not important and will be resolved in time; 3) moderates – serious problems exist and some can be solved, but more hope has to be placed on self-regulation; 4) radicals – problems will not solve by themselves and gender quotas have to be effected, preferably in the statute on political parties. Attitudes toward gender equality are not tied to the woman politician's age or length of the political experience, but with her political party affiliation.

Almost all women politicians were dissatisfied with the mass media with its representation of women stereotypically, unethical coverage, aggressiveness and other things. Women are very sensitive about the way they are represented in the printed and broadcast media, but journalists have many times exceeded the limits.

Estonia's top women politicians do not complain about the difficulties of combining work and family. In their opinion there is no difference between working as a top politician or holding some other responsible job. And their family problems are no greater than other women's.

On one hand, most of the women politicians said that they feel themselves to be equal to men politicians. On the other hand, all of the women politicians emphasised even though they were not asked, that they have to be many times better than men in order to be taken seriously. The question whether women politicians feel themselves to be equal remains unanswered here.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings in the study, the following can be recommended for the advancement of gender equality in politics and mass media:

- raise the awareness of the Estonian public on gender equality's relationship to democracy and human rights via mass media; introduce western values and make available data on the policies of the Nordic countries (especially Finland) on including women in decision-making and leadership; inform the public of the methods (including quotas) which have been implemented and explain simply and intelligibly why this has been done in these countries
- start a comprehensive discussion in the Estonian society on the unsuitability of traditional gender roles today, using the broad possibilities offered by contemporary mass media, and in that context introduce the positions of other countries' opinion makers.
- Schooling and information distribution among women politicians, journalists, and ad experts should move on to providing the same to men politicians, journalists and ad experts. The educating of latter should use male opinion makers, especially from among politicians and media personalities, who are convinced of the need for gender equality. Gender equality sessions to date have brought together mostly a female audience, no matter how narrowly the topic is presented.
- Bring to the attention of the Women Parliamentarians Roundtable, the political parties' women's divisions, and their associations the need to work more on behalf of gender equality advancement in Estonia than has been done to date.

They can also assist the less experienced women who have been elected or appointed to high offices.

- Point out to the Parliament and the parties that inclusion of gender quotas in the statute on political parties would be a radical and effective step in the direction of actual gender equality in the parties, elected offices, and in politics and Estonia as a whole. Political parties are the key institution in effecting gender equality, but they do not acknowledge their role.
- The conflict between mass media and women politicians, especially its ethical aspects, should be discussed at a forum called for that specific purpose and the Estonian Journalists Association should be involved
- Educate mass media specialists (journalists, ad designers) constantly to recognise the undesirability of gender inequality and the positive manifestations of gender equality.

Appendix 1

Women candidates and the elected in the Republic of Estonia, 1989-2004

Elections	Date	Candidates			Total number of seats	Women elected	
		total	among them women			number	%
			number	%			
Soviet Union deputies elections	3/26/1989	107	6	6.0	36	2	5.0
Parliamentary elections							
Congress of Estonia	24.02-01.03.90	1200	144	12.0	508	51	10.0
ESSR Supreme Soviet	3/18/1990	392	24	6.1	105	7	7.0
Parliament	9/20/1992	627	84	13.4	101	13	12.9
Parliament	3/5/1995	1250	219	17.5	101	12	11.9
Parliament	3/7/1999	1884	508	27.0	101	18	17.8
Parliament	3/2/2003	963	206	21.4	101	19	18.8
European Parliament elections							
	6/13/2004	95	23	24.2	6	2	33.3
Municipal Council elections							
Local councils (soviets)	12/10/1989	8948	1342	15.0	3513	316	9.0
Municipal Council	10/17/1993	8971	2535	28.3	3483	834	23.9
Municipal Council	10/20/1996	11128	3674	33.0	3453	920	26.6
Municipal Council	10/17/1999	12802	4562	35.6	3355	951	28.3
Municipal Council	20/10/02	15181	5727	37.7	3273	923	28.3

Source: Raitviir (1996; Vabariigi Valimiskomisjon (Election Commission of the Republic))

Appendix 2

Effectiveness of women's and men's candidacies in Estonia's elections 1992-2004*

Indicator	Parliamentary elections				Municipal elections			EP*** elections	
	1992	1995	1999	2003**	1993	1996	1999	2002	2004
Ratio of women candidates to elected women	7.0	18.3	28.2	10.8	3.0	4.0	4.8	6.2	11.5
Ratio of men candidates to elected men	6.1	11.6	16.6	9.2	2.4	2.9	3.3	4.0	18.0
Number of men candidates to one woman candidate	6.5	4.7	2.7	3.7	2.5	2.0	1.8	1.6	3.1
Number of elected men to one elected woman	6.8	7.4	4.6	4.3	3.2	2.8	2.5	2.5	2.0
Women's increase by multiplier in comparison to '92 or '93	1.0	2.6	6.0	2.5	1.0	1.4	1.8	2.3
Men's increase by multiplier in comparison to '92 or '93	1.0	1.9	2.5	1.4	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.5

*Base data is taken from Appendix 1. ** Law limited candidates list to a maximum of 125.

***EP - European Parliament elections. Each candidates list was limited to a maximum of 12.

Source: The Republic's Election Commission.

Appendix 3

Women in the government of Republic of Estonia 1990-2004

Government	Term	Members		Percent women	Functions funktsioon**
		Total	Women		
Edgar Savisaar*	03.04.90 - 30.01.92	22	1	4.5	S
Tiit Vähi, 1st government*	30.01.92 - 21.10.92	21	1	4.8	S
Mart Laar, 1st government	21.10.92 - 08.11.94	14	3	21.4	B; E; S
Andres Tarand	08.11.94 - 17.04.95	15	1	6.7	E
Tiit Vähi, 2nd government	17.04.95 - 06.11.95	15	2	13.3	E; S
Tiit Vähi, 3rd government	06.11.95 - 17.03.97	17	2	11.8	S; S
Mart Siimann	17.03.97 - 25.03.99	15	2	13.3	S; S
Mart Laar, 2nd government	25.03.99 - 28.01.02	15	2	13.3	S; S
Siim Kallas	28.01.02 - 10.04.03	14	5	35.7	B; E/I; S; S; S
Juhan Parts	10.04.03-	14	1	7.1	B
	05.04.04-	14	2	14.3	B; E
Total/average		176	22	12.5	

Source: Toomla (1999), 161-164, 192-193. The Government of the Republic.

* Transition governments. Restoration of the Republic of Estonia occurred Aug. 20, 1991.

** BEIS typology applied, according to which ministers are divided:

B -function e applies to: foreign, interior, defense, justice and sometimes finance ministers;

E - function e applies to ministers concerned with economic matters: economy, commerce, industry and agriculture;

I - function e applies to ministries concerned with infrastructure: highways, communications, information and environment;

S -function e applies to socio-cultural ministries: social welfare (or labor, health, population, family, children, seniors), culture and education.

Appendix 4

Framework for the interview

1. INTRODUCTION: PATH OF DEVELOPMENT

- > Childhood and gender roles in the family, social status, location of home. Schools, hobbies and choosing a vocation. Work. Present family.

2. POLITICS

2.1. Entering politics

- > Describe your experiences when entering politics. What prompted you to enter politics? Did someone invite you?
- > How did your family, friends, relatives, acquaintances, fellow-workers and boss react to your candidacy, membership in parliament, becoming a minister?
- > Characterise your career in the party. Who in the party has helped your career – has it been the party leader or leadership, the party's women's association, or someone else?
- > For what reason did you go to the parliament (or into politics)? What motivated or forced you?
- > Have you built your political career deliberately?
- > How did you organise your family and home life so that they did not suffer? Do you have difficulties presently in this area?

2.2. Party membership and worldview

- > Before entering the political party to which you belong, what national movements, political associations and parties had you joined?
- > What kind of philosophy does your party embrace? Where is it located on the left-right scale?
- > Do your and your party's worldview and positions coincide?

2.3. Emotional situation with your party

- > Are you satisfied with your party? Or do you have problems with it? What are the causes?

3. GENDER EQUALITY, WOMEN POLITICIANS' EQUALITY

3.1. Promotion of gender equality

- > Have your party leadership and leader encouraged women's membership in the party? Or supported women's candidacy?
- > Are there sufficient numbers of women as leaders of the party's sub-organisations?
- > Does your party's women's association have enough strength to be involved with the party's business, demanding the placement of greater numbers of women toward the top of the candidates list?

- > What role does the Women's Association of the Parliament play? How effective is it?
- > The regional women complain that albeit they are well known and popular in their voting districts, having received many votes in the local elections, the party does not include them in the parliament candidates list. Instead a well known male politician from Tallinn is placed to head the district candidates. Is it that way in your party also?
- > Why do you think a women's party has never come into existence in Estonia? Would it have been necessary or is it necessary now?

3.2. *Gender divided areas of activity and attitudes toward it. Women's role in politics.*

- > Do you agree that women politicians have more social interests and are therefore more leftist than men politicians?
- > A strong tendency exists in Estonia to segregate issues by gender: men handle "hard" issues concerned with interior and external security, finance, and construction, transportation and so on in business, while women take care of "soft" issues which are in the social sphere, such as culture, education, and tourism, food, lodging, auditing in the business sphere. What do you think of such a situation? Is it normal or does it need to be changed so that politics and business would not depend on gender?
- > How do you explain your involvement with "soft" or "hard" issues? How did you happen to get involved with it?
- > Are there differences in the methods of political activity by men and women politicians? If so, how do they manifest themselves? How do women and men politicians differ?
- > Which woman politicians can be considered equal with a man politician? Do you consider yourself equal?

3.3. *Men politicians' attitude toward women politicians and toward gender equality in general*

- How do your male colleagues behave toward women politicians? Have you noticed an attitude of superiority among men politicians? (If necessary) recall the debate over gender equality legislation in the parliament.
- Do you know or recall how the votes divided on the gender equality bill – were they along gender or partisan lines? How would you characterise that situation?

3.4. *Differences in experiences and suitability among women politicians for their positions*

- Do you feel secure and free in politics? Do you get a sense of accomplishment in every way?
- Are women politicians with limited experience a problem in the parliament? What is difficult in your work? How do the experienced and well-informed women politicians regard the less experienced?
- Who should help the less experienced and somewhat ignorant women politicians? How should that be organised?
- Women parliamentarians with interest in executive power. Which is your preference and more suitable to you – legislative or executive power?

3.5. *Need for actual (not formal) gender equality*

- Are you familiar with the gender equality problem? Have you experienced it yourself? What do you think of the fact that women receive about 25% less in pay than men?
- The gender equality law has passed. How important is it for Estonian women and men? Which one needs it most?

3.6. *Meaning of feminism*

- What do you think of feminism? What does the concept mean to you?

4. WOMEN IN HIGH POSITIONS

4.1. *Women's share in the parliament and the government*

- The recent parliaments have had 18-19% women members, ergo 18-19 women. Do you consider that percentage of women sufficient?
- The leading positions in the parliament (speaker, fraction and committee chairmen) – do women hold them in sufficient numbers?
- Do you think that too few women have been elected to the parliament and whose fault is it most of all? Is it the fault of the parties, the people, or something or someone else?
- Over the years 1990-2004 there have been an average of 12.5% women in the government. The present government has two woman ministers, or 14.3%. Is that too few or is it sufficient? If it is insufficient, whose fault is it?
- What would be the result or what would be changed if there were more women in the parliament or government? Is it important to achieve gender balance in the parliament or the government? Why?
- What measures should be adopted in order to get more women in the parliament and the government? What do you think of gender quotas?

4.2. Woman as a prime minister. Woman as a president. Women in other high and important state positions (Legal Chancellor, Chief Prosecutor, State Comptroller)

- Why has Estonia not had a single woman prime minister? Why has not a single political party in Estonia had a woman leader?
- Why has there not been a woman president? Was it possible at all to have one formerly? Has the country matured enough to have one now or pretty soon?
- Which would be a greater achievement – a woman prime minister or a woman president? Which would be more realistic to achieve?
- Why are there no, or very few, women at the highest state offices?

5. WOMEN POLITICIANS AND MASS MEDIA

5.1. *Women politicians' relations with the media*

- > Are you pleased how the media - meaning the journalists – have treated you and presented you to the public?
- > Have you noticed that the media treats women politicians differently than men politicians? With women, the journalists pay special attention to their appearance, children and home while mentioning their political work less. Men politicians are depicted primarily as active members of the public, mentioning their work and hobbies. Do you consider such approaches normal?
- > What should be done about the media forcing traditional treatment and gender roles on the public?

- > How can you as a woman politician oppose it?

5.2. *Representation of women in ads*

- > Have you noticed that consumer or ordinary service ads are beginning to resemble sex marketing ads – all kinds of things are promoted by exhibiting a woman's naked body.
- > Or by representing the woman as the one who washes the dirty laundry while the man puts on a clean shirt – have you seen those ads?
- > What should be done so that women are not represented as sex objects or homemakers in their daily lives?

6. CONCLUSIONS: WOMEN POLITICIANS' WINS AND LOSSES

6.1. *Women politicians' wins and losses on the scale*

What have you gained or lost by going into politics? From the perspective of relations with family, friends, acquaintances, vocation, and economic and social standing? Did your life become easier, harder or remained the same after entering politics (the parliament, becoming a minister, a mayor)?

6.2. *Comparison with men politicians*

If you were to compare your situation with men colleagues, how have you fared? Do you feel yourself to be equal?

Appendix 5

Interviewed women politicians' personal data*

Code	Date of birth	Age	Place of birth	Residence	Marital status	Children	Children's age group	Education	Profession and later field of activity/work	Academic degree	Languages**
1	1945	58	Tallinn	Tallinn	married	1	adult	higher	philologist, writer, journalist, cultural liaison		fi, g, r, e
2	1944	60	Rakvere	Tartu	single	0	x	higher	astronomer, astrophysicist, professor	Ph.D.	r, e, p
3	1961	43	Tallinn	Tallinn	married	3	school age	higher	ceramist, governmental official		e, r, fi
4	1946	58	Germany	Tallinn	married	2	adult	higher	linguist, librarian, entrepreneur, lobbyist	M.A.	e, g
5	1952	52	Haapsalu	Tallinn	married	3	school age and adult	higher	actress, thespian, teacher		r, g, fi
6	1974	30	Tallinn	Tallinn	single	1	toddler	higher	lawyer, politician	M.A.	e, fi
7	1961	42	Võru	Tallinn	married	0	x	higher	journalist		e, r, g, f, fi
8	1947	56	Tallinn	Tallinn	married	3	adult	higher	lawyer, politician	M.A.	e, r
9	1975	29	Tallinn	Tallinn	married	1	infant	higher	lawyer, politician	M.A. 2x	e, r
10	1956	47	Tallinn	Tallinn	married	2	school age?	higher	journalist		r, e, p
11	1962	41	Vaabina	Tallinn	married	1	teenage	higher	psychologist		??
12	1945	59	Pärnu	Pärnu	married	1	adult	higher	linguist, journalist, municipal official		r, e, fi, g, f
12	1952	52	Palupera	Jõgeva	vabaabielus	2	adult	higher	lawyer, politician		r, g, fi
14	1940	64	Tallinn	Tallinn	widow	2	adult	higher	economist		e, r

* as of July 2004

** e - English, r - Russian, g - German, f - French, fi - Finnish, p - Polish

Appendix 6

Interviewed women politicians political affiliation and parliamentary positions*

Code	Party membership	Party leadership association	Delegate to Parliament**	Leadership positions in the Parliament	Committee membership	
1	Est. People's Union					
2	Res Publica		10th	Speaker		
3	Pro Patria		9th			
4	Pro Patria	member	9th			Finance Committee member, 9th Foreign Affairs Comm. member, 9th
5	Res Publica		10th			Cultural Affairs Comm. member HIV, AIDS, Drugs Comm. member
6	Est. Reform Party		9th, 10th			National Defense Comm. member
7	Social Democratic P.	member		Assistant Speaker 9th		
8***	Est. Centrist Party	member	7th,8th,9th,10th			
9	Est. Centrist Party	member	10th			Cultural Affairs Comm. member
10	Social Democratic P.	member	10th		European Affairs Comm. member Cultural Affairs Comm. member	
11	Est. Centrist Party	member	10th	Fraction Chairperson	Social Affairs Comm. member	
12	Res Publica		10th			Foreign Affairs Comm. member
13	Est. People's Union	vice-chairperson	7th,9th,10th			Social Affairs Comm. member
14	Est. Centrist Party	member	7th,8th,9th,10th			European Affairs Comm.vice-chair Economic Affairs Comm. member

* The table represents data primarily from the 10th session, and in some cases from the 9th session.

* - 7th session by 1992 parliamentary elections., 8th - 1995, 9th - 1999, and 10th - 2003.

*** - Siiri Oviir resigned from parliament during the 10th session, having been elected to the European Parliament on June 13, 2004.

Appendix 7

Interviewed women politicians rostrum appearances at parliament during IX and X sessions

Code	Party membership	Parliament*	9th Parliament		10th Parliament	
			Speeches	Remarks	Speeches	Remarks
1	People's Union		x	x	x	x
2	Res Publica	10th	x	x	3	1
3	Pro Patria	9th	13	80	x	x
4	Pro Patria	9th	4	93	x	x
5	Res Publica	10th	x	x	7	4
6	Reform Party	9th, 10th	3	1	8	7
7	Social Democratic		x	x	x	x
8	Centrist Party	7th,8th,9th,10th	21**	43**	51	109
9	Centrist Party	10th	x	x	13	59
10	Social Democratic	10th	x	x	29	155
11	Centrist Party	10th	x	x	21	123
12	Res Publica	10th	x	x	8	16
13	People's Union	7th,9th,10th	41	156	27	20
14	Centrist Party	7th,8th,9th,10th	12**	48**	39	70

* - 7th elected in 1992, 8th - 1995, 9th - 1999, and 10th - 2003.

** - resigned during 9th session to become a minister

Appendix 8

Interviewed women politicians political affiliation, associations with ministerial and municipal offices

	Party membership	Member of government		Association with municipal government	
		Minister	Term	Elected to Town Council	Appointed municipal offices
1	Est. People's Union				
2	Res Publica				
3	Pro Patria				
4	Pro Patria				
5	Res Publica				
6	Est. Reform Party			Tallinn City Council, chrnm.	Tallinn district adm. memb., chrnm.
7	Social Democratic Party				
8	Est. Centrist Party	Social Welfare	05.1990-01.1992		
		Social Affairs	04.1995-11.1995		
		Social Affairs	01.2002-04.2003		
9	Est. Centrist Party	Education	01.2002-04.2003		
10	Social Democratic Party	Ethnic Affairs	03.1999-01.2002		
11	Est. Centrist Party				Tallinn district elder & vice-elder
12	Res Publica				Pärnu City gov't, adviser
13	Est. People's Union			Jõgeva City Council	Jõgeva County gov't, county secretary, Saar County gov't, legal counsel
14	Est. Centrist Party	Economic Affairs	04.1995-11.1995		
		Economic Affairs & Communications	01.2002-04.2003		

Appendix 9

Interviewed women politicians' success at Estonian parliamentary elections in 1999 and 2003 and in European Parliament elections 2004

Code	Party affiliation	Parliament*	Parliamentary elections 1999		Parliament. Elections 2003		European Parliament elections 2004			
			Position on candidates list**	Votes received	Position on candidat. list**	Votes received	Position on candidat.list***	Votes received	Ranking	Elected
1	Est. People's Union		did not run	did not run	19th	593	2nd	601	44th	no
2	Res Publica	10th	did not run	did not run	12th	979	2nd	1 703	23rd	no
3	Pro Patria	9th	15th	298	28th	284	not a candidate	not a candid.	not a candid.	
4	Pro Patria	9th	13th	1 842	18th	1 391	7th	327	58th	no
5	Res Publica	10th	did not run	did not run	7th	2 217	not a candidate	not a candid.	not a candid.	
6	Est. Reform Party	9th, 10th	15th	553	7th	2 236	not a candidate	not a candid.	not a candid	
7	Moderates/Soc.Dems.		did not run	did not run	12th	1 299	2.	5 264	10th	yes
8	Est. Centrist Party	7th,8th,9th,10th	2nd	5 346	2nd	2 631	3rd	16 633	2nd	yes
9	Est. Centrist Party	10th	did not run	did not run	14th	925	9th	201	71st	no
10	Moderates/Soc.Dems.	10th	19th	1 569	4th	1 770	3rd	731	39th	no
11	Est. Centrist Party	10th	49th	1 023	11th	5 919	1st	9 920	5th	no
12	Res Publica	10th	did not run	did not run	111th	1 652	12th	548	48th	no
13	Est. People's Union	7th,9th,10th	2nd	1 593	5th	1 704	not a candidate	not a candid.	not a candid.	
14	Est. Centrist Party	7th,8th,9th,10th	7th	2 241	6th	3 643	not a candidate	not a candid.	not a candid	

* - 7th Parliament elections - 1992, 8th - 1995, 9th - 1999 ja 10th - 2003.

** - candidates list had slots for more than 100. *** - each candidates list had 12 slots.

Appendix 10

Interviewed women politicians public activities and accomplishments>

Code	Participation in social and professional organisations	Awards	Accomplishments
1	former vice-chair Estonian Writers Union, present Board member, People's Union (political party)	Order of the White Star (5th degree - Est.) White Rose Knight's Cross (Finland)	5 novels, 3 story collections, 1 play, translated into 13 langs, trans. 5 books
2	Council member, member of approximately 30 professional and scholarly organisations	Order of the White Star (4th degree - Est.) PDH Order Great Cross (Portugal) Estonian TA Academician	numerous works on astrophysics
3	Katariina Guild, Defense League, Est.- NATO Assoc. Pro Patria women's league - leader		exhibited ceramic products
4	EANC*, ENOC*, Est. Girl Scouts, Est. Nature Found.	World Freedom Fighters Centr. Serv. Cross Baltic-American Assoc. Award	document collect. about Est., biography
5	UNICEF, Large Families Fund, SRPF***	Order of the White Star (4th degree-Est.)	film and theatre roles
6	leader: Res Publica and Reform P. women's league chairman and vice-chairman on two boards	PDH Order Great Cross (Portugal)	
7	Assoc. of Est. Journalists, vice-chairman		journalist's work
8	Est. Women's League, head; Assoc. of Est. Jurists Invasport League, Kalev Sports Soc., Zonta Club	State Coat-of-Arms Order (5th degree-Est)	
9	Assoc. of Est. Jurists, A SEED Europe, YWD member		scholarly publications
10	Assoc. of Est. Journalists		TV journalism
11	chrnm. of three boards and member of several boards		biographic work
12	Pärnu Lions Club Koidula		journalistic works
13	Assoc. of Est. Jurists, Est. Family, Est. Consumers Un. Est. People's Union women's assoc., leader		socio-political activities
14	Est. Economists Soc., Enterprising Women's Assoc.	State Coat-of-Arms Order (4th degree-Est)	

> The data in the first two columns is obtained primarily from the parliamentarians' electronic CV (www.riigikogu.ee), and for non-parliamentarians directly.

* Estonian American National Council - EANC, ** - Estonian National Organizations Congress - ENOC

*** - Social Rehabilitation Promotion Foundation - SRPF

Appendix 11

Relationship between age, political experience and party affiliation of women politicians and gender equality*

	ATTITUDE TOWARD GENDER EQUALITY			
	Negative or considers or considers not important	Some awareness, changes will come in time by themselves	Greater awareness, for changes - must explain & convince	Full awareness, radical measures are necessary (quotas)
AGE GROUP				
Young (21-35)				9
Middle aged (36-50)		10, 11	3	7
Older middle aged (51-65)	5	4, 12	1, 2, 13, 14	8
POLITICAL EXPERIENCE				
Limited	5	12	2	
Average		4, 11	1, 3	
Considerable		10	13	7, 9
Large			14	8
PARTY AFFILIATION				
Center-left parties		10, 11	1, 13, 14	7, 9, 8
Center-right parties	5	4, 12,	2, 3	

* - One women politician's (6) toward gender equality was so atypical that it was not possible to include it.