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Women in the Second Line?*

Women's Participation at Middle-Level

The Representation of Women in the Government Decision-Making in Hungary

ABSTRACT

Politics in Central Europe is the world of men. Especially it is true for Hungary where the representation of women in the political elite and in the decision-making process is very low. The rate of women among the Members of Parliament is approximately 10 % and the average among ministers is only 8 %. The goal of this paper is to present women's participation in the Hungarian government decision-making but not only at ministerial level but at state secretary level also because political and bureaucratic state secretaries play an important role in the decision-making process, too. The only place where women can appear in a larger number in political decision-making is the deputy state secretary position. What is the background behind this phenomenon: the Hungarian political culture or political tradition, or if there is a special political recruiting pattern regarding women as political decision-makers? Feminist theories assume the existence of a 'glass ceiling' for women as decision-makers. The aim of this paper is to examine whether political reasons or other social symptoms cause the issue that women can be found in the second line within executives. The results come from a database that contains social-demographic and career data about all members the of the Hungarian cabinets including political and bureaucratic leaders from 1990 to 2018. The database is suitable for making a comparative examination among cabinets in a long time period.

Keywords: Elites, Executives, Government, Political Leadership, Public Administration, Decision-making

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* This paper is the revised version of my previous study (Ványi, 2016).

INTRODUCTION

Politics in Central Europe is the world of men. It is true also for Hungary: the representation of women in political decision-making is very low. The rate of women among the Members of Parliament is approximately 10 % (B. Kelemen, 2008, p. 69, Ilonszki, 2013, p. 51) and among ministers the average is only 8 % (Ványi, 2015, p. 126.).

The goal of this paper is to examine women's participation in the Hungarian government's decision-making not only at ministerial but at the state secretary level also because political and bureaucratic state secretaries play an important role in the decision-making process, too.

The only place where women appear in a larger number seems the deputy state secretary position in the political decision-making. This tendency fits the general roles of women in the Hungarian society. This paper is interested in investigating the reasons behind this phenomenon: whether political reasons or other social symptoms cause the issue that women can be found in the second line within executives.

The main research questions of this paper are as follows:

- Which positions are open for women in cabinets?
- Why can they be visible only at the middle-level?
- If there is any woman-specific policy field in governments?

The paper covers the 1990-2018 period and shows the changing of women's participation in various governments within the ever-changing government structure. Results are based on an empirical database which concludes data about top ministerial executive bodies. The database includes all political and bureaucratic leaders of governments from 1990 to 2006 and from 2010 to 2018². Between 2006 and 2010 based on the law which regulated the secretaries' legal status there were not any permanent state secretaries at ministries and deputy state secretaries had other legal status at ministries than earlier.

Based on the former Hungarian Constitution and the present Fundamental Law a government is formed by the appointment ministers and it is governing until the new elections or until the end of the Prime Minister's mandate. The scholarly literature understands government cycles in a different way. A new government can be formed in three ways: (1) after the new elections, (2) after the changing the Prime Minister, or (3) after changing the party composition of a government (Müller-Strom 2000, Woldendorp et al. 2000). In this sense there were eleven cabinets in the examined period in Hungary.

² Data were collected from civil servants' biographies that were published in Hungarian Government Almanacs (Kajdi et al 1994, Kiss et al 1998, Kovács n.d, Ughy 2006) and on the Internet. Database includes ministerial leaders' gender, age, position, number of days in position, jobs before and after the ministerial appointment, party membership and nomenklatura position before the regime change.

HUNGARIAN POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

The first reference point to take into account to understand women representation in politics in Hungary is the role of women in politics during Socialism. Based on Lenin's and Engels's theories men and women are (or must have been) equal in the society. Men and women had equal rights and their work is worth the same in the society and for the society. However, we know that the theory could not work in practice: although women had a chance to work in a full-time job in any scope of activities they had double workload because the housework and childcare tasks were the part of the traditional women roles.

This illusionary equality characterized the politics in the Communist period, too. A quota (app. 20 %) was used in the Eastern Bloc countries and thank to this quota the average rate of women in Central European Parliaments was 26 % in 1989 (Piontek, 2016, p. 9). The Hungarian data show a similar situation: the rate of women in the last one-party Parliament (1985-1990) was nearly 20 %³ but only one woman minister filled the position in the last cabinet immediately before the regime change. The number of women in cabinets was very low during the Communist period: altogether 6 women ministers were to be found in 11 cabinets from 1945 to 1990 in Hungary and some of them served more than one cabinet (Bölöny-Hubai, 2004).

The differences between the participation of women in the various political bodies reflect the dual nature of the Communist system. First of all, in theory women and men were equal but in practice not necessarily, indeed, the main state-party decision-making bodies, the Politburo and the Central Committee were absolutely man-dominated. Only two women were members of the executive political bureau⁴ of the Hungarian state-party in the last 5 years before the regime change. These data show that women played a very symbolic and token role in the communist Hungary. They were present but they did not have a real influence in the politics. Only the virtual political representation of women was needed in politics based on the ideology.

The proportion of women in politics decreased significantly after the regime change in Hungary. The average proportion of women is around 10 % in the Parliament and it is a bit less within the members of government in the past 30 years. The average rate of women in politics was the same in all parliamentary and government cycles since the first free democratic elections. Presumably, there is not merely a political reason behind this low women representation level in the Hungarian politics. The political reasons are well revealed: Hungarian political scientists have proven that parties play a gatekeeper's role in the MP's nomination process (Tóth-Ilonszki, 2015) and 'glass ceiling' is also prevalent (Ilonszki-Várnagy, 2007, Várnagy-Ilonszki, 2012) in the long run. Although Hungary has a mixed electoral system it does not help women be more successful in political representation. The majority component is dominated by parties which usually do not nominate women in large number as single candidates in the electoral districts (Ilonszki-

³ The number of women was 80 in the last 386 MPs at the last Parliament (Jónás, 1990. p. 8).

⁴ The number of Politburo members was between 9 and 13 in this period.

Várnagy, 2007, Várnagy-Ilonszki, 2012). Women can appear in larger number in the party lists but they are not in a place which provides real parliamentary seats.

This strategy is valid for right-wing and left-wing parties, too. The representation of women is expected traditionally from the left-wing parties. In spite of the fact that the Hungarian Parliament there were more left-oriented and more right-oriented majorities, the rate of women in the legislature body has always been constant. So on this basis, women MPs are not represented in higher numbers in the left-wing parties than in the right-wing parties though the Hungarian Socialist Party has had volunteer gender quota since 2002. Based on this 20% from MP candidates must be female according to regulations. Moreover, two new left-wing parties after 2010, 'Politics Can be Different' and 'Dialogue for Hungary', use parity norm in party leadership recruitment: one woman and one man lead both parties.⁵

The reason behind the low level of women representation in the Hungarian politics has to be sought outside politics, i.e. in the society. The Hungarian society (like other post-Communist Central European society) is more traditional compared to Western European societies (Piontek, 2016). The expected roles of women and men connect traditionally and conservative social and cultural roles: men are placed in public life and women rather in private life. This relatively schematized statement does not mean that women do not have jobs or they do not participate in any modern economic and social activities. The rate of women in labor market is app. 60 %, which is the same as in Western Europe. It means that family obligations are more decisive and overpowering generally speaking in family life - than public life positions. It is interesting that this traditionally thinking is typical not only in right-wing parties but in left-wing parties, too. Based on a research, women were referred to as mothers by Hungarian left-wing parties in the parliamentary debates most of the times (Vajda, 2019).

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

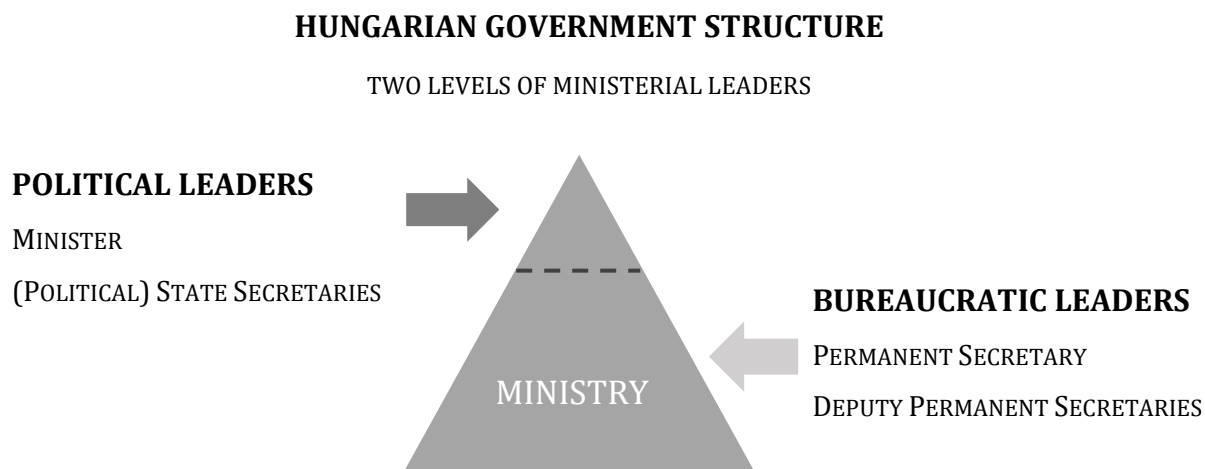
Government structure

"The appointment and deselection of members of government and permanent-, and deputy permanent secretaries are regulated by law in Hungary. Based on status laws, politicians play an important role in appointing the heads of bureaucratic apparatus. Based on different status laws until 2006 politicians and bureaucrats were separated in cabinets. The political leaders of ministries were the minister and the political state secretary. Permanent-, and deputy permanent secretaries were delegated as bureaucratic leaders of ministries. Permanent secretaries guided the bureaucracy of the ministries under the direction of the ministers according to legal and professional requirements. They were appointed by the Head of State, based on the nomination of the Prime Minister, which happens after the Prime Minister asks for the portfolio minister's opinion. The deputy permanent secretaries were appointed by the minister nominated by his/her

⁵ Politics Can be Different was a newly established party in the Hungarian party system in 2009. This party believes and represents mostly the women's equality in its programme and in political actions. Although its Party Parliamentary Group was small (5-9 members) the rate of women was the highest in these PPG (2010: 31 %, 2014: 50 %, 2018: 57 %). (www.parlament.hu)

permanent state secretary. The duration of the two positions was indefinite.” (Ványi, 2018:3)

Figure 1. Ministerial leaders in the Hungarian Government Structure (1990-2006; 2010-)



Self elaboration

“The latest status law in 2010 regulated the legal status of members of the government in the old-new way. On the one hand, the law distinguished the political and administrative levels of ministerial leaders again (see law 1997) but the label and status of the political state secretary changed: the political secretary position was designated as state secretary without reference to politics in the name of the position. This change was needed because of the changing the tasks and responsibilities of state secretaries. Two groups of state secretaries worked and work until now in each ministry: one state secretary is the deputy of the minister and other state secretaries have responsibility for the special policy field in the integrated ministries⁶. On the other hand, the law incorporated the changed system (2006 Status law) of appointing permanent and deputy permanent secretaries. They were nominated in all ministries for indefinite time again under special education conditions.” (Ványi 2011, Ilonszki-Ványi, 2011, Ványi, 2018:3-5)

WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION IN THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKING

EMPIRICAL DATA

The database includes all permanent-, and deputy permanent secretaries from May 1990 to June 2006 and from May 2010 to May 2018. The number of permanent secretaries does not include ‘specific-field secretaries’ between 2006 and 2010 based on the status law of 2006 according to which this group was appointed politically thank to the theory of political governance⁷.

⁶ A new integrated government structure was introduced in 2010. More coherent policy fields were in one ministry (e.g. social affairs, education and culture, and health belonged to the Ministry of Human Capacities).

⁷ The status law in 2006 meant a change of attitude regarding the members of government and secretaries. The new rationale of the law was that the government’s work is fundamentally political. The ministers became both the political and administrative leaders in their ministries and became responsible for both

Table 1 shows the number of ministries and top executive positions in all governments. The numbers in the table are not calculated regarding individuals filling secretary positions in each cabinet. Positions were filled by a large number of returnees and they were counted in each cabinet. The following findings refer to the number of secretaries in each cabinet in this study.

Between 1990 and 2018 eleven cabinets served in Hungary.

Table 1. Hungarian cabinets 1990-2018

Number of cabinet	Term and Prime Minister	Number of Ministries	Number of Ministers*	Number of (Political) State Secretaries	Number of Admin. Secretaries	Number of Deputy Secretaries	Number of members of cabinets
			<i>Political leaders</i>		<i>Bureaucratic leaders</i>		
1.	Antall, József 05/1990- 12/1993	13	30	29	27	90	176
2.	Boross, Péter 12/1993- 07/1994	13	18	17	14	54	103
3.	Horn, Gyula 07/1994- 07/1998	12	26	20	20	102	168
4.	Orbán, Viktor 07/1998- 05/2002	16	29	37	31	127	224
5.	Medgyessy, Péter 05/2002- 09/2004	15	25	31	24	97	177
6.	Gyurcsány, Ferenc 10/2004- 06/2006	15	22	29	22	92	165
7.	Gyurcsány, Ferenc 06/2006- 04/2008	12	19	30	<i>not relevant data</i>	<i>not relevant data</i>	49
8.	Gyurcsány, Ferenc 05/2008- 04/2009	13	17	24	<i>not relevant data</i>	<i>not relevant data</i>	41
9.	Bajnai, Gordon 04/2009- 05/2010	13	18	22	<i>not relevant data</i>	<i>not relevant data</i>	40
10.	Orbán, Viktor 05/2010- 05/2014	8	13	53	13	142	221
11.	Orbán, Viktor 05/2014- 05/2018	10	16	67	13	171	267

*: included Prime Ministers

source: author's research dataset

areas. The permanent secretary position was ended and the deputy permanent secretaries were renamed as specific secretaries (and the position was not a tenure anymore). Legally they had the same rights and tasks as the former deputy secretaries and they could be appointed under the same educational conditions. However, there was an important change regarding specific secretaries' positions.

GENDER COMPOSITION OF GOVERNMENTS

Gender composition rate of the Hungarian cabinets is similar to the rate in the Parliament. Women filled the main executive positions in low proportion, around 14 % in the examined period (*see Table 2*). Data show the difference between political and bureaucratic leader positions. The average of total government rate is increased by women in the deputy state secretary positions. The number of women in political leader positions and in the administrative state secretary positions in cabinets is the same as the rate of women among the Members of Parliament. The proportion of women in the Hungarian Parliament was 9,5 % between 1990 and 2006 (B. Kelemen, 2008, p. 69), 9,1 % in 2010 and it was a little bit higher in 2014 (10,1 %) and 2018 (11,2 %) (Vajda, 2019: 44).

Hungary has never had a woman Prime Minister yet and women filled second positions in larger number than top positions in governments. There is only one exception in political leader positions: the number of women ministers is higher than the number of political state secretaries filled by women in the Medgyessy cabinet. The reason behind is the accession to the European Union in 2004. This cabinet included a minister without portfolio responsible for equal opportunities. This position was filled with two women with special expertise in this field. The position and ministers demonstrated well Hungary's commitment to one of the main values of the European Union.

Data in Table 2 show that politics is still the world of men in Hungary. The rate of woman ministers is very low (7,62 %), which reflects the structural problems regarding women representation in the Hungarian political life (*see Table 2*). The top executive political decision-making positions, prime minister and minister, seem to be almost unobtainable for women. There were three cabinets without woman minister. Although two of them (in the Boross and Bajnai cabinets) were in a special status after a political and/or economic crisis⁸, but the 3rd Orbán cabinet served all of its parliamentary cycles without woman ministers.

⁸ Peter Boross was elected Prime Minister after the death of the previous Prime Minister and Gordon Bajnai was elected after Ferenc Gyurcsany's resignation. Both became heads of government before the end of the normal parliamentary cycle.

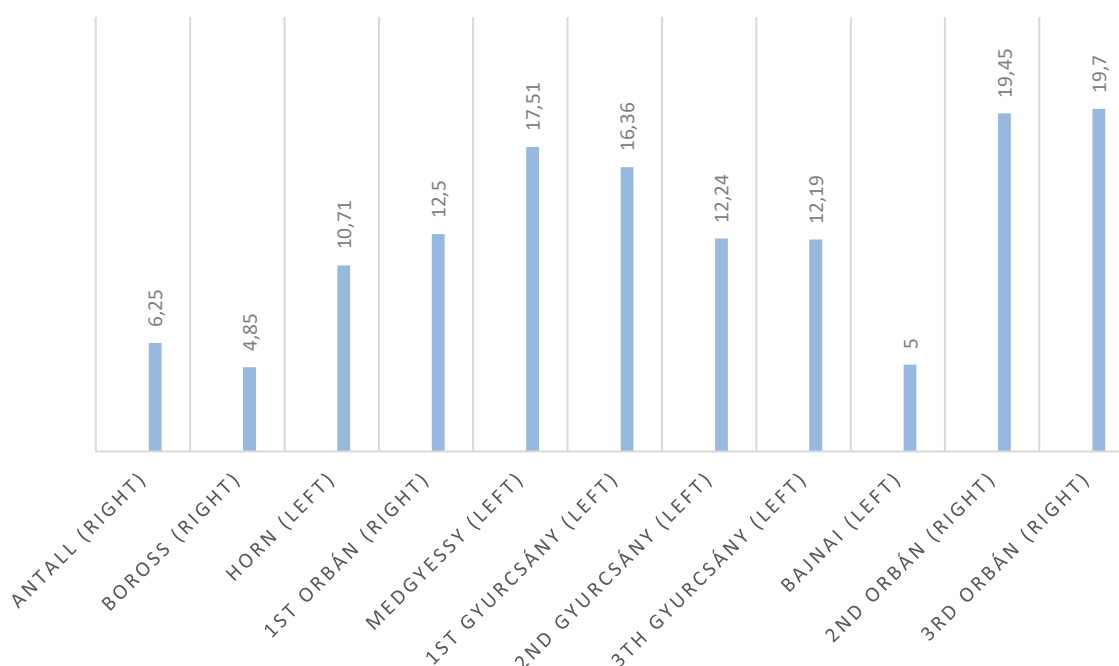
Table 2. Women in the Hungarian cabinets 1990-2018

		Prime Minister	Minister	(Political) State Secretary	Permanent State Secretary	Deputy State Secretary	Male/ Female
Antall government	Male	1	28	25	26	85	165
	Female	-	1	4	1	5	11 (6,25 %)
Boross government	Male	1	17	15	13	52	98
	Female	-	-	2	1	2	5 (4,85 %)
Horn government	Male	1	23	17	18	91	150
	Female	-	2	3	2	11	18 (10,71 %)
1st Orbán government	Male	1	27	31	28	109	196
	Female	-	1	6	3	18	28 (12,5 %)
Medgyessy government	Male	1	19	29	22	75	146
	Female	-	5	2	2	22	31 (17,51 %)
1st Gyurcsány government	Male	1	19	28	20	70	138
	Female	-	2	1	2	22	27 (16,36 %)
2nd Gyurcsány government	Male	1	15	27	not relevant data	not relevant data	43
	Female	-	3	3			6 (12,24 %)
3rd Gyurcsány government	Male	1	14	21			36
	Female	-	2	3			5 (12,19 %)
Bajnai government	Male	1	17	20			38
	Female	-	-	2	2 (5,0 %)		
2nd Orbán government	Male	1	11	47	9	110	178
	Female	-	1	6	4	32	43 (19,45 %)
3rd Orbán government	Male	1	16	57	10	132	216
	Female	-	-	10	3	40	53 (19,7 %)
Men:		11	206	317	146	725	sum men 1405
Women:		0	17 (7,62%)	42 (11,69 %)	18 (10,97 %)	152 (17,33 %)	sum women 229 (14,01 %)

source: author's research dataset

As I mentioned above the Hungarian left-wing and right-wing parties are very similar regarding women's social role and their participation in the politics. *Figure 1* reflects this similarity: the proportion of women in the cabinets is a not relevant difference among left-wing and right-wing parties.

Figure 1. Women in the left-wing and right-wing cabinets 1990-2018 (%)



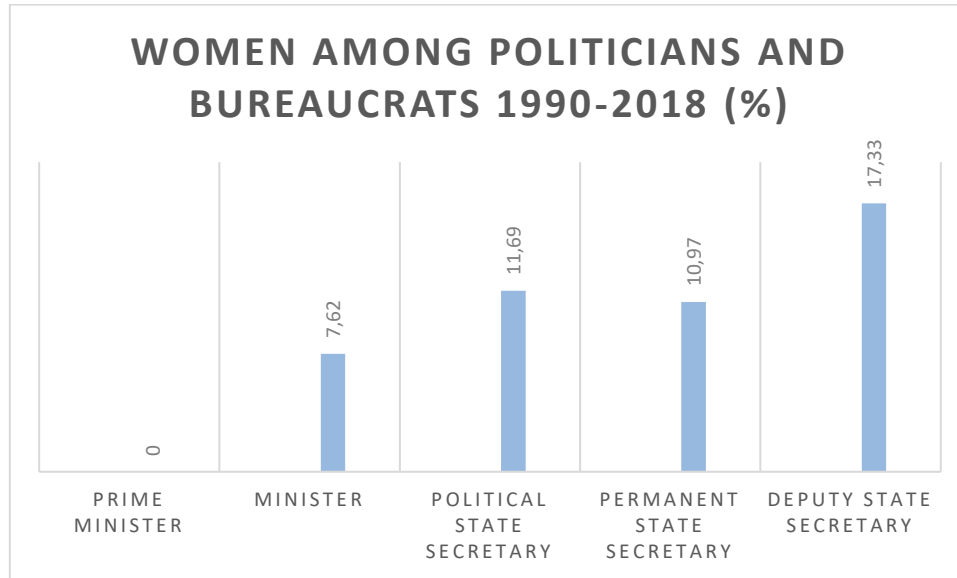
Source: Author's research dataset

However, data show an interesting phenomenon. On the one hand, the proportion of women in the ministerial leader positions has increased since the regime change. On the other hand, the highest rate of women is represented by the last two right-wing cabinets. It is remarkable because of Viktor Orbán's conservative attitude. The Prime Minister expressed his opinion several times that politics does not fit to women due to the rude nature of politics. The hard world of politics and political attacks is not for women. It is an absolutely traditional and conservative point of view but even so the rate of women is the largest in the last two Orbán cabinets. However, data in the *Table 2* shows that the Prime Minister did not contradict himself because most of women were in a second-ranked position within political and bureaucratic leaders, too. This result goes back to the main statement of this paper: women are in the second line.

Summarizing the findings, the rate of women in the top ministerial positions is higher than the rate within the Members of Parliament but data also present that the larger rate of women in governments is caused by the high number of women in the deputy state secretary positions. The proportion of political leaders of ministries after the regime change corresponds to women's rate among MPs.

REPRESENTATION AT THE MIDDLE LEVEL

Data confirm that women are appointed in larger number in second, deputy positions both at politics-and bureaucratic-leader level in the Hungarian ministries (*Figure 2*). The rate of women in the 'deputy' positions: political state secretary position and deputy state are higher than the top political and bureaucratic leader positions.

Figure 2. Women among politicians and bureaucrats in the Hungarian cabinets

Source: Author's research dataset

As it was mentioned above Hungary has never had a woman Prime Minister. The proportion of women is the lowest among ministers except in the Medgyessy cabinet (see *Table 2*). The European experiences show that successful woman politicians are often the ones who represent special woman issues, e.g. women in labor market, political representation etc (Kiss, 2005). However, the special 'female issues-female politicians' context is less typical within the Hungarian woman ministers. It can rather be observed that woman ministers can thank their positions to their professional skills in their jobs or because they are in a leader-position in the coalition parties. Most woman ministers were appointed in portfolio fitting their career-path before ministerial office. The two aspects of appointment are linked several times. For example, Ibolya David Minister of Justice in the first Orbán government was nominated to this position not because she was a woman politician but because she represented the coalition party Hungarian Democratic Forum in the cabinet. However, her portfolio matched with her previous professional lawyer career.

In the other case Katalin Lévai was the Minister of Equal Opportunity in the Medgyessy cabinet. She had a special inverse political career because she dealt with women's equality issues before her ministerial appointment, she published also articles in this policy field. Moreover, as an elected Member of the European Parliament she dealt with woman issues after her ministerial position. However, her political career could not be considered as a typical woman political career path because of her short political job. Before and after her ministerial and MEP positions Katalin Lévai did not participate in political life any more.

A special woman political career path could not be taken into consideration in case of nomination to political state secretary positions. This position is obviously political in the Hungarian political system based on laws and due to the political character of persons who filled these positions. Most of them were in other political positions before the ministerial appointment (e.g. MP and/or member of local committee, mayor, party leader) (Ilonszki-Ványi, 2011, Ványi, 2015. p. 184). But career studies made among woman

political state secretaries show clearly that women were recruited in these positions not only from politics but based on their former professional career, too. Professional expertise and education degree of woman political state secretaries had impact on the portfolio where they were appointed. They hold political leader positions in ministries which policy field suited to their professional career before appointment.

In summary, woman political leaders (ministers and political state secretaries) were recruited based on their political, party leader positions and/or on their professional skills in Hungary. Nomination and appointment to the top leader's cabinet position in Hungary it is up to the decision of parties and of the Prime Ministers and it is less based on gender-aspects.

Permanent state secretary and deputy state secretary positions of ministries are bureaucratic leader positions based on Hungarian status laws. Although women are the largest number in the deputy state secretary positions career studies made among woman bureaucratic state secretaries confirm that gender aspects do not play role in their appointment. The most of woman permanent and deputy state secretaries had previous bureaucratic experiences before their appointment (60 % of administrative state secretaries and 58,9 %⁹ of deputy state secretaries) and it can be generally said that they were appointed in the education degree-compatibility policy field in the cabinets.

WHICH LEVEL OF POSITIONS?

Based on Jacob-Scherpereel and Adams's article (2014) it is very interesting which level of positions could be reached by women in the cabinets. The mentioned paper investigated the impact of international gender norms on the cabinet members between 1979 and 2009¹⁰. One of their hypotheses was that gender balanced norms adopted by the most of the countries in the world have a larger impact on the representation of women in cabinets and less at parliamentary level. The second hypothesis of article was that the gender norms have stronger impact on appointments at low-prestige positions of cabinets. Since both of the examined gender norms (CEDAW, 1979 and Beijing Platform for Action, 1995¹¹) which offer an average of 30 % women's participation rate in politics were ratified by Hungary. Which level of cabinet positions is opened for women in Hungary is tested by the study.

The separation of cabinet positions followed in the research is the same as the method used by the quoted authors (Jacob-Scherpereel and Adams, 2014. p. 326.). Positions in the Ministry of Interior, Defense, Economic Affairs, Finance and Foreign Affairs and Prime Minister's Office, and Cabinet Office of Prime Minister were coded as high-prestige

⁹ Biography data connected to the 2nd and 3rd Orbán governments are deficient. 12 biographies are missing now from 32 woman deputy state secretaries' from the 2nd Orbán cabinet, and 2 form the 3rd Orbán cabinet.

¹⁰ Author's data come from the CIA's *Chiefs of State and Cabinet Members of Foreign Governments* report 1979–2009 in five-year intervals (1979, 1984, 1989, 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009). (Jacob-Scherpereel-Adams, 2014. p. 327.)

¹¹ CEDAW convention was ratified in 1982, and an action plan based on Beijing Platform for Action was accepted in 1997. <http://szmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=996&articleID=31405&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>

positions and others like social affairs, culture, education, health were low-prestige positions.

Table 3. Women in high-prestige and low-prestige positions in the Hungarian cabinets 1990-2018

		Minister	(Political) State Secretary	Permanent State Secretary	Deputy State Secretary	Total
Antall government	high-prestige	1	1	-	1	3
	low-prestige		3	1	4	8 (72 %)
Boross government	high-prestige	-	-	-	2	2
	low-prestige	-	2	1	-	3 (60 %)
Horn government	high-prestige	1	1	-	5	7
	low-prestige	1	2	2	6	11 (61 %)
1 st Orbán government	high-prestige	-	2	1	9	12
	low-prestige	1	4	2	9	16 (57 %)
Medgyessy government	high-prestige	1	-	-	8	9
	low-prestige	4	2	2	14	22 (70 %)
1 st Gyurcsány government	high-prestige	1	-	1	8	9
	low-prestige	1	1	1	14	17 (65 %)
2 nd Gyurcsány government	high-prestige	2	2	<i>not relevant data</i>	<i>not relevant data</i>	4
	low-prestige	1	1			2 (33 %)
3 rd Gyurcsány government	high-prestige	1	2			3
	low-prestige	1	1			2 (40 %)
Bajnai government	high-prestige	-	1			1
	low-prestige	-	1			1 (50 %)
2 nd Orbán government	high-prestige	1	4	3	29	37
	low-prestige	-	2	1	3	6 (13,9 %)
3 rd Orbán government	high-prestige	-	7	1	25	33
	low-prestige	-	3	2	15	20 (37, 73 %)

source: author's research dataset

Table 3 shows a mixed and interesting picture about women in high-prestige and in low-prestige positions in cabinets. First of all, it must be confirmed that women filled in all types of positions: high-prestige positions filled by women are of various types, women were represented at all of the mentioned high-prestige fields in cabinets. Most of low-prestige positions filled by women are social affairs, health, equal opportunity, education

and culture. This picture is similar as in other countries' in the world. Based on data collected by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in 2010 and 2015¹² women are represented the in larger proportion in the following portfolios.

*Table 4. Portfolios held by women 2010, 2015**

2010	2015
Social Affairs	Social Affairs
Family/Children/Youth Affairs	Environment/Natural Recources/Energy
Environment/Natural Recources/Energy	Woman's Affairs/Gender Equality
Woman's Affairs/Gender Equality	Family/Children/Youth Affairs
Employment/Labour/Vocational Training	Culture

source: Inter-Parliamentary Union Survey

*: Table refers to only 1-5 portfolios/year

Moreover, these results confirm the general (and also literature based) sentiment that women filled in 'woman-related' positions in politics.

However, data represent some interesting exceptions. Traditionally, there is an opinion in the European society, especially in Central Europe that right-wing parties represent the idea that women do not want to take part in politics and the world of politics is not the world of women. However, data show that in the right-wing oriented first Orbán government the number of deputy state secretary positions was equal as in high-and low-prestige positions, and the number of women at political state secretary positions and deputy state secretary positions is larger than in low-prestige positions. Moreover, the rate of women in low-prestige positions is the lowest in the last two Orbán cabinets. These data are very important regarding the above mentioned change in government structure in 2010. The government decision-making process fundamentally changed in the new integrated ministry structure. The political state secretary is responsible for making public policy in her or his own special policy field and based on laws the minister heads the ministry within the framework of the general policy of the government. This task and responsibility of political state secretaries in political decision-making throw new light upon the status and number of women at this position in the last two Orbán governments. Data show that although women are rather in second-ranked positions in cabinets it does not mean a powerless position after 2010. It is a very interesting finding regarding the Conservative attitudes of the Prime Minister and the ruling party. Another noteworthy fact is that women were appointed in larger number at high-prestige positions in the

¹² Women in Politics: 2010. Map includes data about 188 countries.

http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnmap10_en.pdf, and Women in Politics: 2015. Map includes data about 191 countries http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/wmnmap15_en.pdf

second and the third Gyurcsány governments where bureaucratic leaders were in political positions.

This phenomenon can be explained by the 'political governance' theory declared Prime Ministers after 2006. Prime Minister Gyurcsány and later Viktor Orbán followed the new style of government decision-making process as 'political governance' meaning that the policy of government is defined by the Prime Minister and the decision-making process must be dominated by political will instead of bureaucratic rationality. It means faster decision-making in practice.

This new governing style has an impact on the place of women in cabinets and it can also explain the larger rate of women in high-prestige positions in the mentioned cabinets. The gender of decision-makers and the high or low level of positions are not important within the new government style. A more important expectation is the commitment to the political program and having professional and political skills to implement decisions efficiently.

This approach of executive political decision-making needs strong and loyalty people. The fact that women were rather in the second-ranked positions in the last two cabinets confirms the Conservative attitude of the Prime Minister but the 'political governing' idea strengthens women at the same time.

However, based on data the representation of women in the Hungarian cabinets is low and they are placed in the second-ranked and low-prestige positions. Proportion of women in Hungarian cabinets is lower than offered by international organizations but the status of women in Hungarian cabinets is similar to that of most countries in the world.

CONCLUSION

Based on offers of international organizations the proportion of women in politics would have been approximately 30 %. Even so the number of women is significantly lower both at parliamentary and at governmental level from in Hungary 1990 on.

The paper presents data about representation of women in the Hungarian cabinets. Summarizing the findings, it can be said that women participated in larger proportion in the cabinets than in the Parliament after the regime change. However, the rate of women in governments is even lower here than generally in the EU countries and this rate is the lowest within the post-communist East Central European countries.

There are two reasons behind it: the Hungarian political culture and tradition and the gate-keeper role of parties in the recruitment process regarding powerful positions in cabinets.

Attitudes of Hungarian society to women's participation in public life are less supportive than in Western Europe. This comes, on the one hand, from the traditionally agricultural society roots of the country and on the other hand, from child-and family-oriented values of society (Pongrácz, 2005), which suggests the unspoken norm that tasks of women are connected to private rather than public life.

The second reason is that the Hungarian parties cannot break through or do not want to break through this attitude of society. Cabinet positions are patronage positions so parties have a strong impact on recruitment processes. Although based on status laws, bureaucratic leaders at ministries would have filled their positions continuously during the change of governments since the regime change people who filled these positions were changed in all the governments (Ványi, 2015).

As shown by data, the above women could reach only the second-ranked leader, less powerful positions in larger number at both political and bureaucratic level in cabinets. Until 2010 women represented woman-specific policy fields in cabinets like social affairs, family-and child affairs, equal opportunity. It is the reason for larger representation of women at deputy state secretary level. This position is one of the higher leader positions at ministries that could be reached through bureaucratic career paths. Administrative positions are woman positions in modern society and to achieve higher positions at bureaucratic level is a real career path for women at ministries. Most of women at deputy state secretary level had long former ministerial career.

This situation is true generally but as shown above the 'political governance' theory caused changes in this tendency. Women positions in cabinets are not women-specific positions because loyalty and commitment are important when filling the top executive positions.

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