

2023

PSAI GENDER AUDIT

Political Studies Association of Ireland

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INTRODUCTION

Gender Audit 2023

The aim of this Gender Audit is to provide an organisational assessment of the relative participation of women and men in the Political Studies Association of Ireland.

In 2015, the Executive Committee decided that a Gender Audit of the organisation would be carried out every three years and presented at the annual conference during the AGM. Since the 2015-2018 audit, it was agreed that the audit would take place on an annual basis, with the findings being made available on the Association's website to facilitate transparency and accountability on this issue.

Since 2019, the role of "Gender Mainstreaming Officer" is labelled "Equality and Diversity Officer" to encompass broader identities beyond gender. This includes, and is not limited to age, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexuality, ability and socioeconomic status. While this report focuses on the extent to which women are represented in the Association, the PSAI's Executive Committee recognises the importance to promote diversity and inclusion of all underrepresented groups.

In November 2023, a Diversity & Inclusion Survey was disseminated to all PSAI members, with the aim of gathering feedback on the demographics of PSAI members and identifying areas in which PSAI can improve the inclusion of its members. The preliminary results were presented to the Executive Committee at its December meeting. The survey report will be made available separately on PSAI website.

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METHODOLOGY

The audit uses data produced from the PSAI membership list provided to the Association by Taylor & Francis, the website of PSAI and the 2023 Annual Conference final programme. The report also uses data from the 2015-2018 Gender Audit of the PSAI carried out by Claire McGing (IADT) in her capacity as Gender Mainstreaming Officer for the Association, the 2019 and 2020 Gender Audits carried out by Lisa Keenan (TCD) and the 2021 Gender Audit by Rachel Gregory in their capacity of Equality and Diversity Officers. Comparative data were drawn from the 2023 ECPR Gender Study report and the 2022 IPSA Gender and Diversity Monitoring Report.

Some limitations underlined in the previous Gender Audit are reiterated here. The data sources available only includes names, not any demographic data (i.e. on gender, group membership and disability status). Since the first audit was carried out in 2015, the gender audit authors have produced data by using the person's name and an online search to confirm the pronouns used. This method compels the researcher to make assumptions about a person's gender, conflates sex and gender and conveys gender and sex binary representations.

The author recognises that self-identification would be the preferred method to reflect the multiplicity of gender identities. This could only be achieved through changes in the data collection process during membership enrolment and conference registration. Last but not least, the lack of demographic data does not allow to report on under-represented and marginalised group other than women.

2022 KEY FIGURES

37% of PSAI members were women

50% of Executive Committee members were women

40% of the Special Groups' conveners were women

1 of the Prize Winners was a woman

45% of the authors of the papers presented at PSAI Annual Conference were women

1 woman was first author out of 16 articles published in print in *Irish Political Studies*

MEMBERSHIP

The membership list was provided by Taylor & Francis and covers all members who paid their membership fee in 2023¹.

Since the creation of PSAI, men have formed a majority of the Association's members. Out of 216 members of the Association who had paid their dues for 2023, 79 were female (37%) and 136 were male (63%)². This represents a 4 percentage-point increase in women's membership compared with 2021, or 24 additional female members. This is the highest level of female membership ever recorded at PSAI, according to previous Gender Audits.

Women are particularly well represented among new members. Among the 105 new members³, 45 (43%) were female. Female representation among new members was even higher in 2022. Although T&F does not provide the academic status of the members, it can reasonably be expected that most of the new members are postgraduate students or early career researchers and that new memberships reflects more diverse demographics among the new generation of researchers in Ireland.

In comparison, 46 per cent of the European Consortium of Political Research (ECPR) account holders in 2023 were female⁴. The most recent iteration of the International Political Science Association survey recorded that women made up between 15.9 and 54.6 per cent of members in the largest member

¹ The membership list covers the period from 1 January – 31 December 2023 and was recovered on 5 March 2024.

² The gender of one member could not be identified, as only initials were included.

³ Taylor & Francis supplied a membership list differentiating new members from those who renewed their 2023 membership.

⁴ ECPR uses a self-identification method by inviting account holders to indicate their gender in their personal space.

associations (>400 members) in 2022. The Associations with the lowest percentage of women were the Japanese PSA (15.9%) and the Korean PSA (17.3%). The Spanish PSA (54.6%) had the highest percentage of female members, followed by the Argentina PSA (46.7%), the Icelandic PSA (45.5%), and the Brazilian PSA (44.2%). Women represented 50.0 per cent of members in the American Political Science Association and 50.0% in the UK PSA in 2022. The PSAI would be situated between the Korean PSA and the German PSA (33.9%) in this ranking.

Table 1 shows figures of the overall membership of PSAI between 1999⁵ and 2022. Figure 1 below presents the 2022 figures of the composition of the Association’s membership disaggregated by sex between 1999 and 2022.

Table 1 Overall Membership, 1999-2023

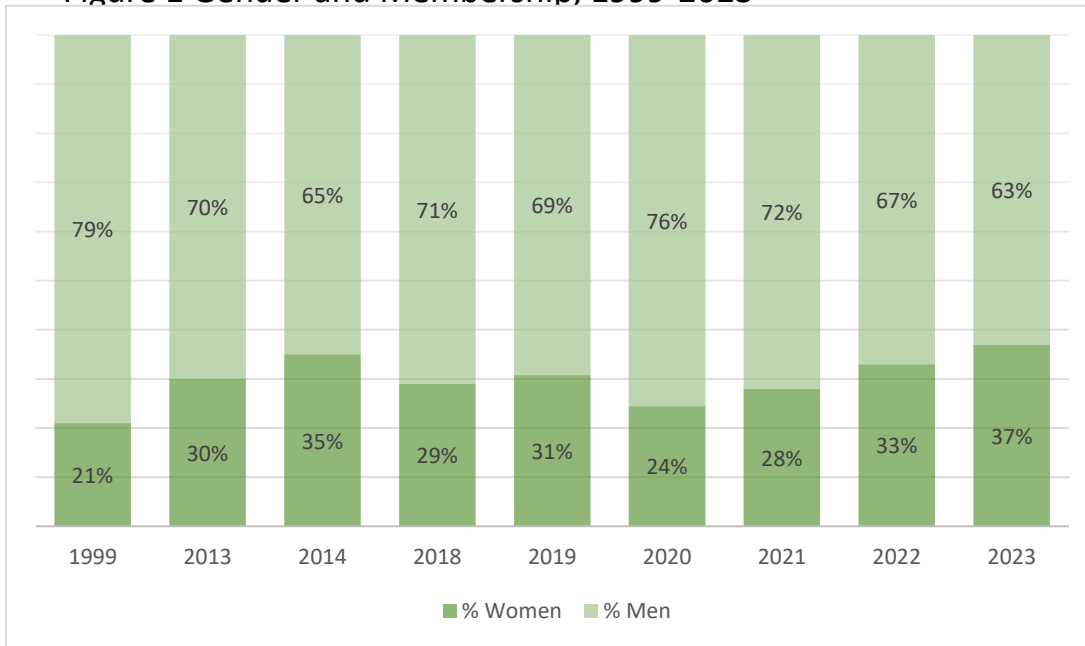
Year	Total number of members
1999	_*
2013	180
2014	209
2018	_*
2019	143
2020	139
2021	141
2022	168
2023	216

*Data on the total number of PSAI members is missing for the years 1999 and 2018

In 1999, women made up 21% of the members of the PSAI. By 2013, this figure had risen to 30%. Female membership reached a peak of 35% in 2014 and then fell by six points between 2014 and 2018. 2019 saw a small increase, but female membership dropped in 2020, corresponding with the Covid-19 pandemic year, the impact of which may have hindered women’s participation in the annual conference. In the same period, the overall number of PSAI members fell slightly. By the end of 2022, the share of PSAI female members had exceeded its pre-pandemic level, with women making up 1 in 3 members of the PSAI. 2023 records the highest proportion of female members of the Association, according to figures available from previous Gender Audits.

⁵ Gender Audit 2015 by Claire McGing used 1999 PSAI data from John Coakley (1999) Political Science in Ireland. Third Edition. Dublin: Political Studies Association of Ireland.

Figure 1 Gender and Membership, 1999-2023



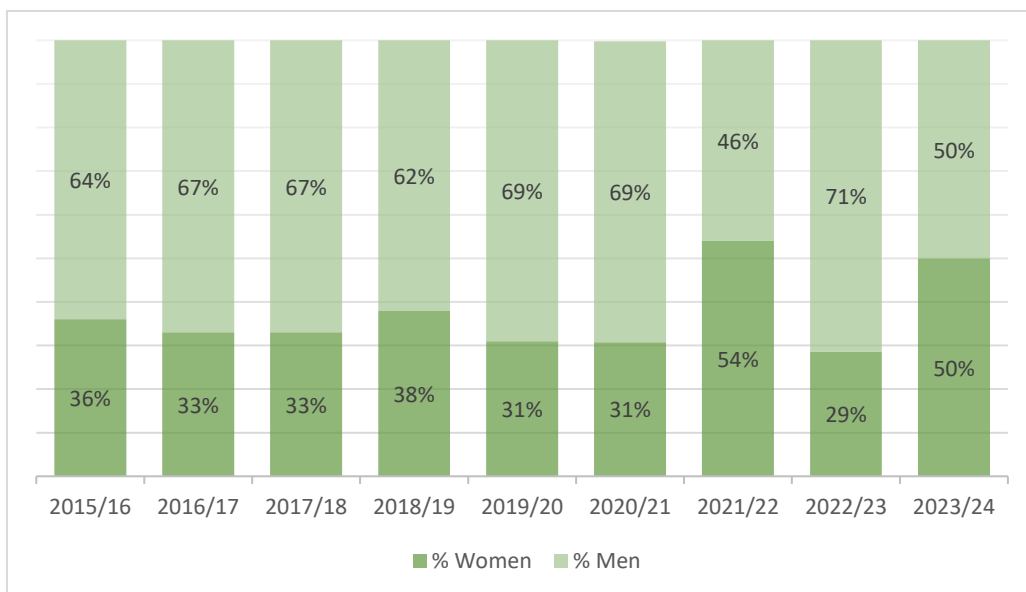
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The PSAI elects its Executive Committee (EC) annually at the AGM, taking place during the Annual Conference. Not all positions are elected, as the Committee has the capacity to appoint EC members for specific roles.

Between 2015 and 2018, women made up exactly one third of the EC members. In 2018-2019, 38 per cent of the members of the EC were women. The 2021-2022 EC saw a substantial increase in women’s representation compared with the previous academic year. Out of 13 positions, 7 were filled by women, representing 54 per cent of the EC. In the academic year 2022-23, female representation in the EC dropped, with only 4 women for 14 roles, including three out of eight officer positions. The 2023-2024 EC Committee reached gender parity, with 7 out of 14 positions filled by women. Four out of eight officer positions⁶ were held by women for that academic year.

The Presidency of the PSAI has been held by men between 2005 and 2022, while women have held the Vice-presidency between 2012 and 2022. In the 2022 AGM, a woman was elected for the role of President and a man as Vice-President. She was the third woman to hold this position at PSAI⁷.

Figure 2 Gender composition of the Executive Committee, 2015-16-2023-24



⁶ Including the Presidency and Vice-Presidency, the Secretary and Treasury, the Postgraduate Representative, the Conference Organisation representative, the EDI Officer and the Academic Freedom Officer.

⁷ Yvonne Galligan served as President from 1999-2002; Maura Adshead from 2002-2005; and Jennifer Kavanagh from 2022.

SPECIALIST GROUPS

PSAI Specialist Groups pursue the purpose of promoting research and networking activities in relation to a specific theme. Each group has a minimum of two conveners, each of whom is normally located in a different institution. Table 2 provides data on the composition of the leadership of the Specialist Groups by sex category. Out of 25 conveners for 11 specialist groups, 10 (40 per cent) are women. This proportion has dropped continuously in the past years. In 2022, women represented 44 per cent of the conveners and in 2019, 51.7 per cent. Women are represented among most Specialist groups. As in the previous year, four Specialist Groups did not have any female conveners, and the Gender and Specialist group had no male conveners.

Table 2 Sex & Specialist Group Conveners, 2023

Specialist Group	Female Convenor(s)	Male Convenor(s)
<i>Computational Methods</i>	0	2
<i>Environmental Politics*</i>	1	1
<i>European Studies</i>	0	2
<i>Gender and Politics</i>	2	0
<i>International Relations and Area Studies*</i>	1	1
<i>Participatory and Deliberative Democracy</i>	2	2
<i>Peace and Conflict</i>	2	1
<i>Political Theory</i>	1	1
<i>Public Policy</i>	0	2
<i>Teaching and Learning in Politics</i>	1	1
<i>Voters, Parties and Elections</i>	0	2
Total	10	15
Percent	40.00%	60.00%

*Data from the 2021 Gender Audit

PRIZES

The Basil Chubb Prize

The Brian Farrell Book Prize

The Elizabeth Meehan Prize for Best Paper

The Teaching & Learning Prize

PSAI awards four prizes to recognise outstanding academic work. The awardees are usually revealed each year at the Annual Conference.

Two of these prizes are named after men (the Basil Chubb prize for Best PhD Thesis and the Brian Farrell Book prize). In 2018 the Best Paper prize was named after a woman (the late Professor Elizabeth Meehan). The Teaching and Learning prize is not named after any individual.

As an informal practice, the EC ensures that sub-groups evaluating the nominees include at least one female and one male member.

In 2023, three of the prizes were allocated to five individuals⁸. One of the five awardees was a woman (for the Basil Chubb Prize). Data available from previous reports since 2018 indicates that no more than one woman has been a prize awardee in a single year.

⁸ The Teaching and Learning Prize was not awarded in 2023.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 2023 Annual Conference of PSAI took place on the 20th, 21st and 22nd October 2023. It was hosted by Queen's University Belfast and took place at the Assembly Buildings and the Europa Hotel. The data produced is based on the final conference programme, which includes the names of the authors of papers. It is not possible to ascertain which of the co-authors attended the conference and presented their work.

The final conference programme includes 44 panels and a total of 236 authors. Of the 236 authors and co-authors featured in the final conference programme, 106 (45 per cent) were female and 130 (55 per cent) were male. This figure is higher than in any previous year, according to previous Gender Audits' figures. The number of panels organised at the 2023 Annual Conference has been higher than in any previous year, according to data recorded in Gender Audits. There was 31 per cent of women authors of papers presented at the Annual Conference in 2022, 28 per cent in 2021 and similar numbers in the previous years. Four panels did not include any female authors or co-authors and two panels did not include any male authors. Four of these panels did not include a chair from another gender. At the 2022 Annual Conference, only one panel did not include any women. In 2021, there were six and in 2020, all panels featured both male and female authors. The Roundtables featured 8 female speakers and six male speakers, and included two women out of three chairs. The Peter Mair Lecture was delivered by a woman.

With respect to the panel chairs at the 2023 Annual Conference, 17 out of 45 were female, making up 38 per cent of the chairs. This is lower than at the 2021 and 2022 Annual Conference, where women made up 46 and 42 per cent of the panel chairs, respectively.

IRISH POLITICAL STUDIES

PSAI publishes the journal of *Irish Political Studies* (IPS). IPS has two co-editors. In 2023, these were two men. In the previous year, the co-editors were a woman and a man. Out of the 40 Editorial Board (EB) members in 2023, 12 were women, making up about 30% of all EB members. Attracting candidates to the IPS editorship and addressing gender imbalance have been concerns of the PSAI's Executive Committee.

IPS publishes four issues a year, including one issue as the Data yearbook. Excluding the Data Yearbook issue and book reviews, IPS published in print 16 articles⁹ with 28 authors in 2023. 2023 has seen a considerable drop in women participation as authors. Out of the 16 first authors, 1 was a woman. Women represented 14 per cent of all authors on all articles published in print during 2023. In 2022, 48 per cent of all authors were women. They represented 52 per cent of articles' first authors. In 2021, women formed 34.7 per cent of the first authors.

⁹ Including five articles published as part of a symposium. The guest editors of the symposium were both men.

CONCLUSION

Progress

- In 2023, PSAI recorded its highest level of female membership since its creation, according to available records. This increase is largely imputable to new memberships, which attracts a high proportion of women.
- The Executive Committee has recovered an equal representation of women and men, after the share of women Board Members dropped in 2022.
- Women participation at the Annual Conference has reached its highest level in 2023.

Gaps

- Women are consistently underrepresented among PSAI prize awardees.
- Sex-segregation in conference panels and specialist groups still occurs.
- After year 2022, in which a majority of the first authors in *Irish Political Studies* were female, these were largely underrepresented in the 2023's journal issues.

Moving forward

- New memberships appear to consistently include a high proportion of women and it is reasonable to think that they are more representative of a diversified new generation of Political Scientists in Ireland. PSAI should continue its efforts

to attract and retain this membership. The challenges will be to make this participation sustainable, as this population tends to join the Association to attend PSAI conferences punctually.

- As other Political Studies Associations, PSAI should endeavour to implement a self-identification method for data collection purposes, by inviting its members to identify their gender, and possibly other demographic data.