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Women are always Right: Analyzing the gender-based perspectives of the Portuguese Populist Radical Right party Chega and its women members and supporters

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History Department

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Writing this dissertation allowed me to understand how important it is to study gender from an academic perspective, giving me the opportunity to deeply research a topic I was so curious about: the connection between gender and populist radical right parties. Throughout this process, I learned to listen with academic curiosity instead of judgment, I stepped out of my comfort zone, I reflected on my own beliefs, and I became a better student and person. I am so thankful for this tumultuous and rewarding journey. On that note, I would like to thank the nine women who kindly donated their time to be interviewed for this dissertation and talk to me about their opinions, values and political beliefs and whose contributions were essential to this dissertation.

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## **Abstract**

For the past decades, Populist Radical Right (PRR) parties have gained prominence in Europe, entering the political mainstream. Among common features of these parties are included the support for traditional gender roles, opposition to the so-called “gender ideology” and feminist movements, and the protection of women’s rights through nationalist immigration policies. While research on the gender element of these parties has surged alongside their electoral success, a scarcity is observed on gender-based research on the Portuguese PRR, particularly on the party *Chega*, which has become by 2022 the third largest political party in the Portuguese Parliament.

This research centers *Chega* as a case study, setting out to answer “To what extent do the gender perspectives of women members and supporters of *Chega* align with the official views of the party?” This question is addressed on three different levels, from a very formal source to a highly informal one: an analysis of the *Chega* official documents present on its website, an analysis of a semi-public party event on Feminism, and the analysis of private interviews with *Chega*’s women members and supporters. The results reveal that though an overall alignment is found between these perspectives, the interviewed women generally expressed more straight-forward and radical stances regarding gender-based subjects, as well as heterogeneous views, particularly in matters such as abortion and work-family balance. This dissertation therefore contributes to the growing research on how PRR parties engage with gender, as well as radical right-wing women’s perception of this topic.

**Keywords:** gender; Populist Radical Right parties; party identification; *Chega*; Portuguese politics

## Resumo

Ao longo das últimas décadas, partidos de Direita Radical Populista (DRP) ganharam destaque e entraram no cenário político europeu. Entre as características ideológicas comuns destes partidos, destacam-se a defesa de papéis de género tradicionais, oposição à denominada “ideologia de género” e aos movimentos feministas, bem como a proteção das mulheres através de políticas migratórias nacionalistas. Embora a investigação sobre a influência do género nestes partidos tenha crescido em simultâneo ao seu sucesso eleitoral, são escassos os estudos sobre o género no contexto da DRP portuguesa, nomeadamente sobre o partido Chega, em 2022 tornado o terceiro maior partido no Parlamento português.

Esta dissertação concentra-se no caso do Chega, visando explorar “Em que medida é que as perspetivas de género das mulheres membros e apoiantes do Chega se alinham com as visões oficiais do partido?”. Esta questão é investigada através de três fontes de informação, com níveis decrescentes de formalidade: documentos oficiais do Chega disponíveis no seu *website*, um evento semipúblico sobre feminismo promovido pelo partido, e entrevistas com mulheres membros e apoiantes do mesmo. Os resultados revelam que, embora exista uma clara concordância geral entre estas perspetivas, as entrevistadas geralmente expressaram visões mais diretas e radicais sobre as várias dimensões de género, bem como perspetivas heterogéneas em questões como o aborto e o equilíbrio entre trabalho e família. Esta dissertação contribui, assim, para a crescente corrente de investigação sobre a abordagem de questões de género pelos partidos DRP, bem como a perceção das mulheres detentoras desta ideologia sobre estes temas.

**Palavras-Chave:** género; partidos de Direita Radical Populista; identificação partidária; *Chega*; política portuguesa

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## **List of Abbreviations**

AfD – Alternative for Germany

ENF – Europe of Nations and Freedoms

EP – European Parliament

ID – Identity & Democracy

LGBTQ+ – Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, plus

MP – Member of Parliament

PNR – Partido Nacional Renovador (in English: National Renewal Party)

PRR – Populist Radical Right

PSD – Partido Social Democrata (in English: Social Democrat Party)

QDA – Qualitative Document Analysis

SD – Swedish Democrats

## 1. Introduction

Populist Radical Right (PRR) parties have, for the past decades, been gaining power and entering the political mainstream all throughout the European continent. One commonly noted trend of these parties is their conservative view of the role of the woman, both within the family and within society itself, supporting the traditional structural gender roles which privilege a strong presence of women on the private sphere and men on the public sphere (Spierings & Zaslove, 2015). Additionally, anti-feminist views (Bernardez-Rodal et al., 2022; Meret, 2015; Pettersson, 2017), a strong opposition to a movement they designate as gender ideology (Paternotte & Kuhar, 2017; Kováts, 2018; Pető, 2015) and a firm disapproval of the granting of reproductive rights (Akkerman, 2015; Juhász & Pető, 2021; Koralewska & Zielińska, 2022) are all gender-based views present in a large number of PRR parties throughout Europe.

The academic interest in radicalisms, as well as national and cross-national research on the gender element of these parties, has been exponentially rising, in parallel to the parties' growth in electoral success in Europe. The study of this party family holds great academic relevance, precisely since the growth of its influence worldwide, in Europe, and in each national context, leads to the need to scientifically study and understand the ideologies behind these parties, namely regarding gender. Indeed, the anti-feminist, anti-gender ideology rhetoric of PRR parties which have risen to power has by now altered public policies and influenced citizens' lives, attitudes and behaviors (Muis & Immerzeel, 2017; Mudde, 2019). It is therefore necessary to comprehend the ideologies of these parties and analyze each country and party according to their own concrete conditions.

This dissertation therefore aims to contribute to an extensive and growing range of research into European radical right-wing parties under a gender analysis, through the presentation of a case study on the Portuguese PRR party *Chega* (in English: Enough). Although research on PRR parties from a gendered lens has been a trending topic in academia, as noted by Mulinari and Neergard, "there are still very few studies analysing the worldview of women active in these parties, and the role of gender as metaphor, identity and policy within these parties" (2014, p.43). This is precisely what this study intends to identify, particularly considering the paucity of research on women's worldviews and presence in PRR parties. Moreover, research on Portuguese PRR parties, though rising, is still very limited, which can partly be explained by the quick and recent emergence of the party *Chega*. This party, despite only being founded in 2019, has by 2022 grew to become the third largest political party in the Portuguese Parliament (CNE, 2022). In particular, this dissertation aims

to answer the research question: “To what extent do the gender perspectives of women members and supporters of *Chega* align with the official views of the party?”.

This research presents a dual viewpoint addressing the party's stances on gendered issues, and whether those same stances are backed by their women supporters, understanding what differences and similarities can be found on those two perspectives. In order to do so, it examines this question on three different levels, from a very formal source to a highly informal one: an analysis of the *Chega* official documents, which are completely accessible to the public on their website, an analysis of a semi-public party event on Feminism, and lastly, the analysis of private interviews with women members and supporters of *Chega*. The views presented in these three sources are further analyzed and grouped in eight gendered-based dimensions: Gender Equality, Work-Family Balance, Reproductive Rights, Gender-Based Violence, Femonationalism, Sexuality and Gender Minorities, Gender Ideology and Feminism. All of these dimensions represent trending topics on the intersection between gender and PRR parties and guarantee a holistic outlook on gender-based subjects.

Furthermore, following this logic, from the analysis of a very formal source to a highly informal one, it is possible to draw relevant conclusions and raise pertinent questions: do women members and supporters of *Chega* overlook their party's positions on gender or do they align with the party's views on the matter? Can heterogeneity be found among the two viewpoints and do more informal environments, such as private interviews and the event allow for the expression of that heterogeneity? In fact, understanding these ideas is particularly relevant when considering the general theories behind women's political participation. Recent studies present the existence of a gender gap in voting and membership in PRR parties (further addressed in Chapter 3) and conclude that women are generally in favor of more liberal, left-leaning policies than men, thus being less likely to be involved in PRR parties – this leads to the puzzle addressed by this dissertation, exploring the perspectives of women on the other side of this trend, who do not believe there is an incongruity between their gender and their political ideologies.

In parallel, as will be addressed in the next section, PRR parties generally emerge after heightened crises and attempt to attract voters who feel marginalized by the current political system (Mudde, 2007). These parties have often switched their positions to more mainstream ones in order to be able to form coalition governments with moderate right-wing parties and therefore present a high level of volatility in their party positions (de Langue, 2012). Ennser (2012) claims that the EU radical right party family is more heterogeneous than its counterparts, concluding that though PRR parties' perspectives are homogeneous on

immigration, EU authority and environment, their views on economic policies, for instance, are much more diverse. Similarly, McDonnell and Werner (2018), as well as Rovny and Polk (2020) denote the fact that whilst voter-party congruence regarding immigration is high, on other subjects, high levels of alignment between voters and party have not been witnessed. Hence, it is clear that the radical right encompasses a wide constituency and range of supporters who identify with the party for different reasons, not necessarily holding the exact values of the party in all policy areas (Röth et al., 2018). This could, therefore, mean that these parties attract voters and members who agree with the party on their anti-system beliefs, but not necessarily on all the party's ideologies and therefore leads to an expectation that some heterogeneity may be found among the views of the party and of their women members and supporters on gender-based issues.

In order to explore this alignment of women members and supporters of *Chega* with the party, this dissertation is structured the following way: the first chapter refers to the current introduction to this research, which is followed by an introduction to the concept of Populist Radical Right parties, particularly their characterization and evolution in the European continent. The third chapter reviews the literature on the subject of the intersection between gender and PRR parties, firstly through a section on women's involvement in these parties, followed by a section on the parties' views on gender-based subjects. It then moves to the fourth chapter, which presents the case study utilized in this research and addresses the current literature on the party *Chega*. Subsequently, the methodology of this dissertation is expanded, focusing on its research design and data analysis and collection methods, which then opens way for the sixth chapter where all the data is analyzed, with subsections dedicated to each dimension analyzed in this research, as well as each data source. Lastly, the results of this analysis are discussed in light of the literature on this topic and the dissertation ends with the conclusions, reflections and contributions of this research as a whole.

## **2. Characterization of European Populist Radical Right parties**

Extremist movements and, particularly, European right-wing extremism have always been a highly debated subject in Political Science, as well as International Relations – particularly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as European societies seem to demand more information about them, both academically and, most notably, on media outlets (Mudde, 2019). This far-right frenzy in Europe opened doors for the rise of multiple academic debates, namely a terminological one (Mudde, 1996; Kitschelt, 2007). Indeed, multiple studies will study the same movements and ideologies while using different terms, such as far-right, extreme-right, radical-right, new right, populist radical right, neo-populism (Mudde, 1996). However, these terms are not necessarily synonymous: March and Mudde (2005) distinguish radicalism from extremism by affirming that extremism fully opposes the values of democracy and its systems, maintaining its activities outside of it, while radicalism advocates for systemic change, without necessarily being anti-democracy and tending to engage in this same political system and institutions despite their self-proclaimed anti-systematic existence (March & Mudde, 2005; Rydgren, 2007). The usage of the term “far-right” in regard to political parties is highly contentious as well, one wave of scholars defining it as an ideologically wider term, which encompasses both the extreme right and the radical right parties (Golder, 2016; Mudde, 2007; Mudde, 2019; Rydgren, 2007). Since the 2010s, however, a steady increase of the usage of the term Populist Radical Right (PRR) parties has been witnessed, a term explored by Betz (1994), followed by Mudde (2007), Mudde (2010), de Lange (2012) and Muis and Immerzeel (2017), for instance. Due to its preponderance in the literature, this is the terminology adopted in this dissertation.

Having addressed the terminological debate, a key question is, then, what are the characteristics of the Populist Radical Right parties? Mudde (2007) presents three core features in the parties: nativism, an ideology which combines nationalism and xenophobia and considers non-native elements of the state to be a threat to the nation; authoritarianism, as in the preference for strict societal rules, where those who disobey them are heavily penalized; lastly, populism, a heavily debated term, which Mudde (2007) argues to be an ideological feature of these parties, instead of the common definition of the term as a “political style” (Mudde, 2007, p.23), or a “mode of articulation” (Laclau, 2005, p.104). Indeed, according to this perspective, society is constituted of “the pure people” and “the corrupt elite” (Mudde, 2007, p.23) and the will of the people should, accordingly, be privileged over constitutional and human rights. Rydgren (2007) argues that this populism displayed by radical right parties result in claims that the political elites value internationalism more than their own nation’s interests, concluding that the new radical right parties “share a core of ethno-nationalist xenophobia and antiestablishment populism” (Rydgren, 2007, p.242). This

opposition to internationalism, multiculturalism, accompanied by the nativist traits of PRR parties, which may in some cases be “biologically or culturally racist” (Golder, 2016, p.480), has been demonstrated by multiple parties’ anti-immigration ideals and attitudes, (Golder, 2016; Betz, 1994; Van Spanje, 2011; Mudde, 2019; Caiani, 2019), which in the European case can manifest itself into islamophobia as well (Hafez, 2011; Lucassen & Lubers, 2012; Kallis, 2018).

Whilst this description of PRR parties and their ideology is a key element of the study of this subject, it is crucial to recognize that the populist radical right is, as any other political phenomena, dynamic, changing in space and time. Naturally, the PRR parties in Europe differ from the ones of Asia or North America, for instance (e.g. Parker, 2018; Higuchi & Matsutani, 2016), and even within Europe, one may find key differences between parties of this same family (e.g. Macklin, 2013; Mendes & Dennison, 2021; Pytlas, 2013). Similarly, the PRR parties currently active in Europe do not hold the same characteristics as those of the 1980-1990 period. Von Beyme (1988) first argued that the rise of right-wing extremist parties come in waves – as does the research on these parties (Mudde, 1996). The question of waves of the radical right has become more and more relevant in current literature on this subject. In fact, Mudde (2019) builds on Von Beyme’s (1988) wave theory, defending that in the post-2<sup>nd</sup> World War period, the world has witnessed three waves of the far-right, and presenting the thesis that as per the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are currently witnessing a fourth wave of the Radical Right. Proceeding to describe this wave, its origins and how it differs from the past decades of radicalism, Mudde provides three key crises that led to the existence of this movement, namely “the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (and beyond), the Great Recession of 2008, and the “refugee crisis” of 2015” (Mudde, 2019, p.28), which then resulted in a complete entrance of these parties on the political mainstream of many Western nations – this mainstreaming of the parties as well as their heterogeneity being, therefore, the most defining characteristic of this fourth wave.

It is evident that academic research of the radical right has taken a clear interest in finding explanations for the (re)emergence of the radical right in the 21<sup>st</sup> century both in regard to the general European tendencies and ones in specific countries. Various studies have converged in claiming the existence of demand-side and the supply-side explanations for the radical right (Eatwell, 2003; Mudde, 2007, Golder, 2016). Demand-side explanations consist in societal grievances that open space for these parties, multiple of them lying in modernization (Golder, 2016; Rydgren, 2007). Indeed, Betz (1994) points to the dramatic shifts in socioeconomic and cultural structures in post-industrial Western Europe related to, among other aspects, technological advancement, globalization, immigration and social problems such as unemployment, which created a fertile ground for the growth of the PRR

parties and movements. Norris (2005) adds the concept that certain events, “shocks”, influence public opinion on key issues of the political debate, hence influencing their voting preferences as well: matters such as the defense of national security, and cultural protectionism as a response to globalization and multiculturalism are all examples of issues raised by radical right parties that arise from these long-term trends. Indeed, these parties seem to capitalize off societal fears and insecurities, such as terrorism, vilifying entire religions, ethnicities and groups (Halikiopoulou & Vlandas, 2019). This goes in hand to the previously described characteristic of these parties to be populist, a view being supported by Vieten and Poynting (2016), who share Mudde’s (2019) perspective that the current PRR parties hold significant differences to previous movements of the same sort, arguing that in order to further separate the pure people from the corrupt elite, the far-right tends to choose a public enemy to project societal insecurities stemming from nativism.

These last conclusions focusing on the populist manner in which these parties spread their ideologies lie outside the above-provided definition of demand-side explanations, instead falling under the supply-side ones. Supply-side explanations involve the existence of what is referred to as political opportunity structure, meaning long-term, structural features of the political system combined with medium and contextual short-term elements which open windows for the growth of the extreme right, such as the electoral system, decentralization, party systems (Arzheimer & Carter, 2006). Muis and Immerzeel (2017) distinguish, within the supply-side, external supply factors, mostly related to the political and institutional context, and the internal side, referring specifically to the traits of these parties, their arguments, ideology and leadership. The question of radical right leadership is particularly interesting, as scholars refer back to Max Weber’s (1947) theory on charismatic authority (or leadership), which reveal that the role of party leaders are key for mobilization and recruiting of new members and electorate (Caiani, 2019; Muis & Immerzeel, 2017).

These explanations become extremely relevant due to the heavy influence of PRR parties in European societies. Mudde (2007) notes that in the first decade of the 2000s, the PRR party family was the only party family established in the post-war period who managed to obtain significant results in both Western and Eastern Europe. Golder (2016) additionally claims that the far-right is the fastest growing party family in Europe, noting that these parties have even, in several countries, been part of national governments, mostly due to cabinet structures which allow for the formation of coalitions (de Lange, 2010). In fact, this new wave of rise in populist radical right parties’ success has been influencing national and European policies, both through the own actions of these parties and through the increasing influence they carry on mainstream parties (de Lange, 2010; Norris, 2005; Mudde, 2019; Vieten & Poynting, 2016).



In 2019, Mudde (2019, p.13) wrote:

“As I finish this manuscript, in May 2019 (...) Within the European Union (EU), two governments are fully controlled by populist radical right parties (Hungary and Poland), another four include such parties (Bulgaria, Estonia, Italy, Slovakia), and two are held up with support of a populist right party (Denmark and the United Kingdom).”

It is indubitable that the radical right is growing, and rapidly. Since 2019, Fratelli d'Italia (FdL), an Italian ideologically populist and nativist party has risen to power and Italy has now joined the list of governments controlled by PRR parties (Puleo & Piccolino, 2022), and all throughout Europe, in each following election, the more influential these parties become. Studies have focused on policies implemented by the radical right parties in power and how they influence several fields, Muis and Immerzeel (2017) pointing to a limited effect on policy outcomes, particularly regarding immigration. Mudde (2019), on the other hand, points to multiple negative outcomes originated from PRR parties' influence, such as the terrorizing of minorities such as Roma people, the increase in concern for topics such as immigration and terrorism even in countries which face little to no impact of such questions, the closing of borders during the refugee crisis and severe effects on countries' foreign policy and gender-based issues. This last topic of gender and its intersection with the radical right is the focus of this study and, accordingly, the next chapter will address the literature on this matter.

### **3. Gender Dynamics in Populist Radical Right parties**

Having introduced the theories behind the characteristics and evolution of PRR parties, this chapter is divided into two subsections which review the literature on the two main subjects of this dissertation: firstly, how women are involved in PRR parties, their roles and ideologies and secondly, the PRR parties' official views on gender. This literature review provides an understanding of this issue in the generality of European countries, which further contextualizes this research, allows the positioning of the Portuguese case at hand in the overall field, and originates the dimensions of analysis of this research.

#### **3.1. Who are the women of the Populist Radical Right?**

This dissertation involves both a focus on the PRR parties' views of gendered subjects and those of the women who believe, support and help grow their ideology. For this reason, it is necessary to explore the complex ways in which women interact with these parties. At the core of feminist political and international studies is the idea that to understand any phenomenon, one must feel the curiosity to ask where the women are, why they are there, and their own views regarding the same phenomenon – only then is it possible to fully comprehend complex social reality (Enloe, 2000). Hence, it is evident that while PRR parties are known for being *Männerparteien*, or men's parties (Mudde, 2007), the growing influence of women inside the parties, either as members, leaders, influencers or overall participants, is worthy of extensive insights (Blee, 2020). Because of the antifeminist and gender-conservative values within multiple PRR parties, it is expected that women are simple bystanders or passive symbols for the radical right, when in reality, it has been studied that "women interact within the ideological ecosystem, rather than passively receive content." (Campion, 2020, p.1) and help empower other women within the group (Yuval-Davis, 1996).

Studying women's presence and influence in extremist and radical groups is not, by any means, a recent academic trend, though in recent years the literature addressing it has increased exponentially. Kathleen Blee's works on women inside the hate movement in the United States during the 20<sup>th</sup> century are vital studies on this subject (e.g. Blee, 1996; Blee, 2003; Blee, 2007). Through in-depth interviews, Blee (1996) clarifies how women in these groups merge the male-dominated ideology with their own self-understanding and interests, while describing the successful forms in which these movements have been able to recruit women. It also demonstrates another facet of far-right and racist groups and movements, through studying them ethnographically, thus reaching the deep interests, motivations of members of these groups and, in particular, women (Blee, 2007).

In studying women in Ku Klux Klan groups, Blee (1996) concludes that despite their absence in leadership roles, women's presence within these movements is essential for the subsistence of the movements themselves and their entrance in those groups does not happen, unlike previously debated, out of obliviousness and confusion for the ideological of racist neo-Nazi movements. Scholars have also conducted historical research on women inside fascist and Nazi movements throughout the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and especially during the Second World War – many of these studies focus extensively on how women were seen as the mothers of the nation and bearers of the culture (Rupp, 1977; Jeansonne, 1996; Yuval-Davis, 1996).

Looking into women's involvement in contemporary PRR parties, it is important to bear a few questions in mind. Mudde (2007), discussing the characteristics of Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe, as well as the discrepancies of ideology between each PRR party in different countries, introduces the concept of *Männerparteien* (2007, p.90), or "men's parties". This concept describes the common tendency of women being severely underrepresented in PRR parties and the undoubtable domination of men in regards to party membership, representation and voting – ideas corroborated by numerous studies (e.g. Givens, 2004; Rippeyoung, 2007; Hansen, 2019; Weeks et al., 2022). However, this issue is present in parties of other ideological roots, meaning the sole answer to why women are underrepresented in PRR parties cannot be entirely ideological (Mudde, 2007). Indeed, many explanations have been provided on this matter. Mudde's (2007) theory on the voting gender gap, that can also reflect the membership gender gap, relies on the idea that men and women are socialized differently, leading women to fear new parties, particularly those who are perceived as extreme ones. Likewise, Givens (2004) considers that simply being a woman already vastly decreases one's probability of voting for PRR parties. Other explanations, such as the gendered anti-immigration attitudes can be provided: Hartveld and Ivarsflaten (2019) add the theory that women's comparatively higher internal motivation to control their prejudice and follow social norms does not allow PRR parties, which employ anti-immigrant ideologies, to connect with that electorate and recruit more women.

Various studies have also focused on women's roles in the PRR parties, both as members and as supporters – in other words, what their functions are within the party, if they differ from their male counterparts and the issues they tend to focus on as political activists. Félix (2017) distinguishes three types of female far-right supporters in Hungary: the culture keeper, focused on the cultural and biological reproduction of the subculture; the fighter, who joins paramilitary, masculinist movements; and the spiritual woman, who is involved in healthcare jobs, namely with alternative medicine and creates her own ideological frame. Parallely, Campion (2020), analyzing global women participation on radical right movements

(not necessarily political parties) identifies six forms of participation, *“violent actors, thinkers, facilitators, promoters, activists, and exemplars”* (Campion, 2020, p.2), expanding the idea that women have all sort of roles within the radical right, from being involved in the formulation of the group’s ideology, writing manifestos, working on logistical and organizational elements, promoting the ideology on social media, attend protests, meetings and events, among many others.

However, this does not mean that PRR parties are gender-equal regarding the functions each gender occupies on the party. A study on the Italian party Lega (League, in English) touches on the subject of women wings, existent inside many different parties of all ideologies – the League, for instance, had a women’s association, which held less political activities and more cultural and social ones (Feo & Lavizzari, 2021). This leads to a discussion on the gendered elements of party work, as in various PRR parties, women are background actors: *“Women, more often than men, perform admin work, provide catering for social events (...), they fill important ‘informal leadership’ roles and sustain the activists’ group cohesion”* (Scrinzi, 2014, p.9). This goes in hand with the public/private description, thoroughly researched by feminist scholars, which explains how according to traditional gender roles, women are perpetually associated with the private, domestic sphere, and men with the public sphere, thus proving that this distinction is still felt on organized political parties (Landes, 1998; Scrinzi, 2014)

Furthermore, examining the discourse trends of women politicians and leaders of PRR parties allows us to understand the topics they are most focusing on. There is a gendered element to how PRR parties’ women handle the issue of immigration, as well as topics related to gender, such as those of reproductive rights, sexual violence, gender identity, feminism, family issues, which are often brought up by women in these parties (Mulinari & Neergard, 2014). Their position as women who fall outside of political correctness, contemporary feminism and leftist values is useful for the parties, in the sense that it creates the image that their ideals are more mainstream, as well as being more easily digested, especially by women, if they are coming from a woman as well (Scrinzi, 2014; Blee, 2020; Pettersson, 2017). Indeed, when researching women members of PRR parties’ discourse trends, Petterson (2017) touches on their importance as promoters of the party ideology to other women, stating that *“a populist radical right party also needs its female cheerleaders”* (Petterson, 2017, p.20).

As will be seen further along, many European PRR parties’ ideals on gender are connected to traditional family values and gender roles, anti-feminism and anti-gender ideology (Akkerman, 2015; Félix, 2015; Darakchi, 2019; Pető, 2015). These topics are

precisely the ones that, as aforementioned, if touched on by female members and leaders, give the most credibility to the party's ideals. However, although they are prominently featured on their discourse, their perspectives change from party to party and some key differences have been observed: Meret and Siim (2015), comparing discourse trends of women leaders of PRR parties in Denmark, Norway and France conclude that their ideas of feminism are different: Marine Le Pen, from France's National Rally, recognizes the need for gender equality and considers herself marginalized because of her gender and her ideological and political views and identity, while Pia Kjærsgaard and Siv Jensen, from Danish and Norwegian PRR parties respectively, believe gender equality policies have gone too far. Pettersson (2017) presents an ideological dilemma of women involved in PRR parties, which is the one of "*Feminism versus Patriarchy*" (p.12), as female members seem to alternate ideas of protecting women's rights, particularly associated with femonationalism, a term which will be further discussed in the next section, and patriarchal stances of traditional gender roles and anti-feminism.

Anti-feminism is, indeed, extremely prevalent in women members of multiple PRR parties' discourse: Mulinari and Neergaard (2017) conclude from a series of interviews on women members the Swedish Democrats (SD) party that they gladly adhere to the traditional gender roles and believe that modern feminism ignores key biological differences between men and women. For Swedish women with radical right values: "*feminists and gender scholars are the ones that nowadays stand for the suppression of women*" (Pettersson, 2017, p.18). Similar examples come from other parties, such as the Spanish party Vox, whose female President of the party for Madrid led a movement of women against the celebration of International Women's Day, whilst repeatedly and openly opposing the feminist movement and asking other women to join her (Cabezas, 2022). Another example comes from the Finns Party women organization who describe themselves as women, but not feminists (Ylä-Anttila & Luhtakallio, 2017).

As has been clarified throughout this section, though women's membership and support for European PRR parties is less prominent than men's, their presence brings complex dynamics into question: they promote their traditional view of the pure, native woman, whose role is to ensure the continuation of the bloodline of the nation itself, speak out against feminism and multiculturalism, and their presence in high ranks of the party helps the amplification to a feminine electorate, vastly contributing to their electoral success and allowing their ideologies to enter political institutions and affect policy-making.

### **3.2. The gendered views of Populist Radical Right parties**

Having covered the literature regarding the presence and participation of women in PRR parties, we move to a central aspect of this literature review: understanding how European PRR parties view and incorporate gender-based concepts into their own policies, discourses and documents. Although gender-based research on the radical right has been expanding, there is still a lack of scientific understanding of how PRR parties in Europe view gender – while there are significant findings on several specific parties and countries in Europe, such as PRR parties in Italy, Spain, France, Poland and Hungary, (e.g. Bernardez-Rodal et al., 2022; Cabezas 2022; Geva, 2020; Grzebalska & Pető, 2018), multiple countries where the influence of PRR parties is expanding but not fully consolidated still have not been subject of this kind of research (Kottig et al., 2017). Nevertheless, several studies have been successful in drawing conclusions which apply to the generality of PRR parties in Europe and how they utilize gender (e.g., Blee, 2020; Campbell & Erzeel, 2018; Erzeel & Rashkova, 2017; Weeks et al., 2022). Therefore, this section presents defining conclusions of the existing body of research on the gendered views of PRR parties.

The previous discussion on the tendency of lack of women's participation in PRR parties helps introduce this topic: as explored in the previous section, PRR parties are tendentially overrepresented by men in membership, representation and voting (Mudde, 2007). While this fact opens an extremely relevant discussion about women's involvement in these parties, it also holds significance in the question of gender-based issues in party ideology. Studies on the connection between the populist radical right and gender have focused on the role of masculinity in these parties (e.g. Nagel, 1998; Norocel, 2010; Ralph-Morrow, 2020; Blee, 2020) and explained the lack of female voting and support – that is, the populist radical right gender gap (e.g. Rippeyoung, 2007; Hartevelt & Ivarsflaten, 2018). However, and despite a masculinist outlook and perspective intrinsic to the parties, it is undeniable that PRR parties have incorporated gender into their discourse and policies. This leads us to the research puzzle of how can parties, despite these more conservative tendencies, attract women voters and supporters and whether those women support their gender-based policies and discourses.

A concept that helps guide this discussion relates to the relationship between women and the nation. As detailed earlier in this literature review, PRR parties share a common trait of nationalist and nativist beliefs (Rydgren, 2007). As briefly explored in the previous section, Yuval-Davis (1996) develops the idea that women are often perceived by nationalists as biological, cultural and symbolic reproducers of their own nation, culture or ethnicity. Not only is it their job to bear children and therefore physically contributing to the expansion of the

ethnicity, group, or nation, they must socialize their child into the group and educate them to join in on the same belief system – a woman is not simply a woman. She is, in nationalist ideology, above all, a mother and a symbol for the nation itself (Rupp, 1977). This idea has since been expanded by a number of feminist scholars and has helped understand both women's role in the radical right and how PRR parties view gender: with a deep conservatism and support for traditional gender roles. These views are, in numerous parties in European countries, present, for instance, within political discourse, official documents and proposed policies, expressing the idea of complementarity between a man and a woman, both holding specific roles within the family and society (Akkerman, 2015; Félix, 2015; Darakchi, 2019, Mayer et al., 2014).

Evidently, this means that the parties in question also demonstrate a tendency to hold traditional beliefs in matters of LGBTQ+ rights (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer + community), same-sex marriage and questions connected to transgender and non-binary rights, as analyzed by Darakchi (2019) in the case of multiple Bulgarian parties and organizations, Yermakova (2021) regarding the Polish party Law and Justice, Cabezas (2022) on the Spanish party Vox, Petterson (2017) on the Finnish Finns Party and Doerr (2021) regarding Alternative for Germany (AfD). The existing body of research on different European PRR parties allows for an understanding of a common trait within the official positions of PRR parties regarding gender: despite gender being a highly consensual term in numerous scientific fields, referred to as a social construction connected to biological sex but socially and culturally elaborated (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2013), PRR parties view gender as equating biological sex, failing to acknowledge the cultural and societal influence, as encompassed by the concept of gender essentialism (Blee, 2020).

This conservatism is similarly expressed regarding the question of women's sexual and reproductive rights, most notably, abortion (Akkerman, 2015). Regarding this subject, PRR parties hold similar perspectives as non-radical, conservative right-wing parties – despite their unquestionable differences regarding other areas, such as nativism, which is the key trait of PRR parties not typically shared by neoconservative parties (Mudde, 2007). The line, however, can be thin, particularly when numerous European PRR parties have ties with religious institutions, in most cases catholic, as is the case of Poland's Law and Justice Party, which established itself as a Christian conservative party, swiftly turning more and more right-wing and being now academically referenced as a PRR party (Meardi & Guardiancich, 2022). Similar findings regarding the connection between parties and religion have been registered regarding the French National Rally – previously known as National Front (Davies, 2010; Akkerman, 2015), Germany's AfD (Althoff, 2018) and the Italian Lega (Donà, 2021). Cross-national studies have corroborated the idea of a correlation between PRR parties' voters and

their religious beliefs, although the existing body of research demonstrates controversy as to whether that correlation is positive or negative (Immerzeel et al., 2013). The question of abortion is widely debated within the radical right spheres, and in countries governed by PRR parties, namely Hungary and Poland, abortion laws are some of the strictest ones in Europe, constituting focal points in terms of civil discussion (Juhász & Pető, 2021). In the case of Poland, for instance, the Constitutional Court 2020 declaration deeming abortion as unconstitutional has led to a multitude of national and international protests (Koralewska & Zielińska, 2022).

Another characteristic of PRR parties and their connection to gender is the vehement opposition to the feminist movement and the so-called “gender ideology”. According to Butler (2019) this term originates in the 1990s Roman Catholic Family Council, who presented the idea that gender is becoming a threat to the family. Though existing literature lacks consensus on a definition of gender ideology, Corredor (2019) describes opposition to this term, meaning the anti-gender ideology shared by PRR parties, as a rhetorical counterstrategy which challenges the hierarchical constructions of race, gender and sexuality, discredits feminist and queer theories, impedes global and local efforts toward gender mainstreaming, obstructs LGBTQ+ equality policies and enforces “heteropatriarchal conceptions of gender, sex and sexuality” (Corredor, 2019, p.616). The recent growth of the populist radical right, which can be associated to Mudde’s (2007) aforementioned theory on the fourth wave, has been connected to the rapid emergence of anti-gender ideology movements all over the world (Kováts, 2018; Paternotte & Kuhar, 2018). Currently, the opposition for gender ideology, the firm defense of a traditional heterosexual family and of what they consider natural, God-given tendencies has become not only a common trait of PRR parties, but a key component of the radical right ideology itself, accompanied by racism and nationalism (Butler, 2019). Kováts and Pöim (2015) defend that these beliefs function as a glue for PRR parties and other conservative parties and groups, leading to a unification of several right-wing political and civil actors on this matter, thus making this belief a core one. As a matter of fact, studies on this connection between PRR parties and anti-gender ideology beliefs have demonstrated how important gender actually is to these parties – Grzebalska and Pető (2018) argue that the anti-gender policies have been a pillar of the political transformation in Poland and Hungary from liberal to illiberal states.

In sum, by claiming the existence of propaganda for LGBTQ+ rights, sex education in schools and other gendered subjects, PRR parties undermine the concept of gender equality, as well as the feminist movement, against which many of them actively stand. According to Mudde (2007), stances on feminism differ amongst European PRR parties, some of them acknowledging some historical achievements of the movements, others completely



disregarding any feminist issue. Nowadays, though, research indicate that parties tend to uphold anti-feminist beliefs, particularly touching on the excesses of feminism and how it has wronged families, children and society overall – Bulgaria's PRR party United Patriots fits this description (Darakchi, 2019), as well as Spanish party VOX (Bernardez-Rodal et al., 2022; Cabezas, 2022), Portuguese PRR parties *Chega* and *Ergue-te* (Santos & Roque, 2021), the Sweden Democrat party (Norocel, 2010; Mulinari & Neergaard, 2017), the Danish People's Party (Meret, 2015) and the Dutch Party For Freedom (Verloo, 2018). These anti-gender and anti-feminist arguments can be added to the racist, nationalist, xenophobic beliefs as to explain the essence of the radical right: the construction and exclusion of an "Other" against the normal and normalized "Us" (Sauer et al., 2016).

This relationship between how PRR parties utilize gender and the Us/Other dichotomy present in their ideology is unavoidable. This connection has gained another dimension in recent years, as research demonstrates an argument shift in several parties, culminating in a concept described by Farris (2012) as femonationalism, which "describes the attempts of European right-wing parties, among others, to co-opt feminist ideals into anti-immigrant and anti-Islam campaigns" (Farris, 2012, p.187). Mudde (2019) defends that seeing as many PRR parties around Europe place Islam as a threat, their nationalist beliefs of anti-immigration and nativism are then applied to women's rights, thus claiming that in keeping Muslim immigrants out of their countries, they are protecting their vulnerable native women, whose rights can be guaranteed under Western values. Additionally, when self-proclaimed feminists adopt these nationalist arguments, they aid in vilifying an entire religion and culture (Farris, 2017). Farris's (2012) concept of femonationalism has rapidly developed in academic studies on PRR parties and has since become a topic of discussion. Even before the coining of this term, Akkerman and Hagelund (2007) touch on how several political parties, not only PRR, have utilized women's rights as an argument in defense of unculturalism and against immigration. More recently, feminist theorists argue that femonationalism is an attack on feminism, as it does not serve all women, relies on traditional gender roles and the so-called gender ideology and instrumentalizes women's rights (Santos & Roque, 2021; Lazaridis et al., 2016). Following this line, Santos and Roque (2021) argue that femonationalism and antifeminism have shared ideals and that their beliefs on women's roles in society and reproduce an ideal "White Christian imagined community" (Santos & Roque, 2021, p.54).

The existent literature on this subject demonstrates numerous cases of femonationalism in European PRR parties. Studies based in Sweden describe femonationalism to present itself in two ways, namely the existence of feminists who identify themselves with anti-immigration and nationalist stances, as well as the appropriation of feminist ideals by far-right actors such as the Sweden Democrats Party, who refer to gender equality to stop Muslim

immigration, leading to threats and hate directed at anti-racist feminists and activists (Sager & Mulinari, 2018). Colella (2021) provides context on the now-governing Italian party FdL, noting a convergence between antifeminism and femonationalism, most symbolized by its leader Giorgia Meloni, who is considered as the ideal white, Christian woman as compared to the “Other” – black men as rapists, Muslim and other racialized immigrants as criminals, among many other harmful stances. It must be stated as well that femonationalism is not only felt in PRR parties’ campaigns and policies internally, and has been employed in statements within the European Parliament (EP) by several political groups, namely the Europe of Nations and Freedoms (ENF) group [succeeded by the current Identity and Democracy (ID) group]: Kantola and Lombardo (2021) refer to a speech made by an ENF Member of the EP which precisely demonstrates these femonationalist beliefs: “Should we not be protecting our own women and children against the rapes and assaults that we have seen across European cities before we start trying to integrate more?” (Kantola & Lombardo, 2021, p.574). Femonationalist discourses are particularly noteworthy when we consider that they are mostly expressed by women members and leaders of PRR parties, as opposed to men, this being a tendency developed in the previous section. Mulinari and Neergaard (2014) studied how women who joined the Swedish PRR party SD employ the idea of “care” as a justification for their racist attitudes. Clearly, this goes in hand with femonationalism, as SD women consider migrants to be a threat to native people and especially native women, therefore meaning that by keeping them out, they are caring for their culture, their women. This proves that even in their anti-immigrant, racist beliefs, traditionally feminine traits are emphasized (Mulinari & Neergaard, 2014; Scrinzi, 2014). Blee (2020) highlighting this idea, states that “Gender also matters on a rhetoric level in the far right in messages of aggressive, powerful masculinity and vulnerable, maternal femininity” (Blee, 2020, p.419).

This element of violence, and particularly violence against women, is relevant to PRR parties not just in matters related to immigration: Meguid et al. (2022) analyzed over 84 party manifestos of European PRR parties and focused on how women’s interests are included in those documents, namely the issues of gender equality, work-family balance and violence against women. Indeed, multiple studies explain how PRR parties take the subject of gender-based violence as justification for their proposed policies – the Spanish PRR party VOX openly challenges the national legal system for combating gender-based violence (Alonso & Espinosa-Fajardo, 2021), the Portuguese party *Chega* additionally mentions domestic, sexual violence and pedophilia as key problems in today’s society (Santos & Roque, 2021). Moreover, Reinhardt et al. (2023) investigated the salience of gender-based violence in three European PRR parties’ social media posts, concluding this topic is mostly referenced in relation to femonationalist stances, as well as to illustrate parties support to women.

Yet, while the previous findings undoubtedly describe a trend of gender conservatism and disregard for gender-sensitive policies, it must be stated that PRR parties have, in specific circumstances, adopted gender-equal stances and included women's interests on their programs and policies, as well as pro-LGBTQ+ stances (Meguid et al., 2022; Spierings & Zaslove, 2015). Meguid et al. (2022) found a direct correlation between inclusion of women's interests in PRR parties' programs and period of electoral struggle, this struggle being considered as the key driver for the inclusion. This finding contrasts with previous studies on this issue which claim that women's presence in the parties positively affects its focus on women's interests (Meguid et al., 2022). This correlates with a point made in the previous section of this literature review, on women leaders and members of PRR parties and their relationship with feminism and gender equality: as previously stated, some women leaders hold a less opposing view to feminism, their discourses and perspectives on the topic of gender matching those of women holding other ideological views (Meret & Siim, 2015). Similarly, some parties have begun adopting more lenient positions on LGBTQ+ rights, associating their protection to the threat of immigration, in a similar pattern as femonationalism (Spierings & Zaslove, 2015).

In sum, this section has proven we can define tendencies and patterns in how different European PRR parties address gender-based issues. However, this subject is not linear, and each particular country and party must be analyzed according to its particular circumstances, which is why case studies such as the one in this dissertation are highly relevant for the overall literature. Furthermore, and as has been proved by the literature, studying PRR parties from a gendered lens is a trending subject within this academic field. Despite its high academic relevance, this research has societal implications as well, as the actions and ideologies of any particular party help shape citizens' expectations, ideals and values – particularly when we discuss a party family which has rapidly expanded throughout Europe, and, as referred earlier, whose anti-gender rhetoric has influenced the lives of people in minority groups, and citizens' attitudes and behaviors (Muis & Immerzeel, 2017). This dissertation therefore contributes to the current literature by approaching this issue from the perspective of an under-researched PRR party and linking the two subjects studied in this chapter: women's involvement in PRR parties and the party's gendered views, to then draw conclusions on the alignment and heterogeneity found through these two perspectives. On that note, the next chapter will expand on the Portuguese PRR party *Chega*, the subject of this dissertation, touching on its origins, evolution, characteristics and its connections to gender.

#### 4. The new Portuguese Radical Right: the case of *Chega*

The Portuguese radical right movement stands out notably since it reflects the concept of Portuguese exceptionalism. This term refers to the fact that until 2019, Portugal appeared to deviate from the broader European trend of an increase in PRR representation in parliamentary seats and government coalitions (Carvalho, 2022). One year before, in 2018, the Spanish PRR party VOX gained, for the first time, parliamentary seats in regional and national legislative bodies, the last years of the 2010s thus marking the end of the belief that Iberian countries would be an exception to the growth in representation of PRR parties in Europe (Heyne & Manucci, 2021). This supposed immunity was, in fact, nothing more than an illusion largely associated with the fact that both Portugal and Spain had lived through authoritarian regimes in the last fifty years (Heyne & Manucci, 2021; Marchi, 2013). After the end of the Portuguese dictatorship, *Estado Novo*, in 1974, nationalist right-wing parties struggled to reach the mainstream political stage. Marchi (2013) points to a disorganization amongst different factions holding these ideological views and how their struggle to stay united, which is added to the hostility of the general population to right-wing ideologies immediately associated with the previous regime (Marchi & Azevedo Alves, 2022). The few PRR parties in existence had minimal prominence in political debates: such is the case of *Partido Nacional Renovador* (PNR), now named *Ergue-te*, a PRR party which since the late 1990s has frequently tried to rebrand itself and enter the political stage, without success (Marchi, 2013; Manucci, 2020).

As expanded previously, extensive research on PRR parties suggests that there are supply and demand-side explanations for the emergence and growth of these parties (Mudde, 2007). Research on the Portuguese case demonstrate that *Chega's* entrance in mainstream politics correlates most highly to supply-side explanations, namely the spatial competition between mainstream parties and the center-right party *Partido Social Democrata* (PSD)'s convergence towards the center, as well internal factors such as leadership (Carvalho, 2022). Indeed, the fact that no party had yet been able to meet the necessary conditions to enter the mainstream political dialogue did not indicate that the Portuguese population did not, previous to 2019, lack a sharing of radical right ideas (Mudde, 2019). Therefore, when in 2019, *Chega* gained a parliamentary seat, receiving the votes of 1% of the voting population (CNE, 2019), core beliefs of Portuguese people about their country were put to test (Manucci, 2020). Comparatively to other European countries where PRR parties had had their breakthrough, Portugal had a significantly smaller number of refugees, lower immigration rates, as well as a more recent memory of an authoritarian right-wing regime (Fernandes & Magalhães, 2020). Additionally, the Portuguese society viewed itself as a non-racist country, one that had previously been a better colonizer, more tolerant and less

racist and violent than its counterparts (Manucci, 2020). Despite its comparatively low percentage in the elections, in the following years, *Chega* received an exceptional amount of media attention (Prior, 2022; Caldeira & Machado, 2023) and in the 2022 legislative elections, 12 members of parliament from this party were elected (7% of total votes), solidifying the fact that in just under 3 years, *Chega* was born and became the third most voted political party in Portugal (CNE, 2022)

Studies on the party *Chega* converge on the belief that it falls under Mudde's (2007) categorization of a PRR party in all its characteristics: nativism, authoritarianism and populism, as defended by Santana (2021). Some of the party's pledges include "to suppress gender quotas for political offices, chemical castration for sex offenders and harsher sentencing for corruption cases" (Fernandes & Magalhães, 2020, p.1041). Additionally, seeing as Portugal, unlike other European countries, had arguably not faced the same immigration problems, *Chega* often targeted Roma communities, displaying the same PRR nativist discourses (Afonso, 2021). Santana (2021) considers *Chega*'s authoritarian traits to be seen through the party's defense of a strong rule of law, as stated in their Declaration of Principles. Lastly, populist tendencies are found in the party's disdain for the Portuguese Constitution and its anti-elitist appeals (Palhau et al., 2021), as well as its presentation of *Chega* as the savior of the Portuguese people (Santana, 2021). Overall, *Chega* shared multiple traits with other PRR parties, proven by its affiliation to the ID European Parliament party family, joined by parties such as Italian's Lega and Germany's AfD (Marchi & Azevedo Alves, 2022).

Furthermore, similarly to other PRR parties, *Chega* has presented traditional and conservative views on gender. The research on this party's connection to gender is scarce, which is why this dissertation aims to close some gaps in the literature around this topic. However, some important points have been raised in previous studies. As detailed in a previous section, an electoral gender gap is frequently found regarding PRR parties. In the case of the first elections of 2019 where *Chega* won its first seat, this gender gap was not found, and the party seemed to draw an equivalent number of female and male voting (Espírito-Santo & Weeks, 2022). On the 2022 elections, however, Magalhães's (2022) data on the difference between how men and women voted in Portuguese 2022 legislative elections, according to the poll surveys, point to a 5% gender gap in the votes for *Chega*: around 5% of Portuguese women voting for the party, as opposed to 10% of men – this is therefore first time substantial evidence is found on a radical right gender gap in Portugal, which coincides with the European tendency previously pointed.

Santos and Roque (2021) analyzed a series of official documents released by *Chega* through the lens of femonationalism and the intersection between anti-immigration and anti-feminist stances, concluding that there is a juxtaposition between the two in the sense that “European white masculinity and femininity is presented as under particular ‘outside’ threat” (Santos & Roque, 2021, p.53). *Chega* also became subject to media attention regarding gender-based issues on several occasions. A key example occurred during the campaign for Portuguese presidential elections, where the party’s leader and presidential candidate, André Ventura, openly criticized left-wing candidate Marisa Matias’s makeup, namely the use of red lipstick, as a way to demonstrate her unprofessionalism (Caldeira & Machado, 2023). According to Caldeira and Machado (2023), this hypermasculinistic action reflects *Chega*’s deep conservative views on gender, their opposition to gender ideology and their affinity to gender roles in place during the time of the Portuguese dictatorship, where women could not be involved in any political action. Additionally, *Chega*’s first and only female member of parliament, Rita Matias, received extensive media attention when she described herself on an interview as an anti-feminist, which according to Martins and Cabrera (2022, p.84), represented a strategy of “breaking the indissociable link between feminist movements and women’s causes”, while still reassuring that *Chega* is committed to defending women”. Though a search of the literature revealed few studies which tackle *Chega*’s perspectives of gender, the existent research points to some key conclusions: the party is described as presenting stances against gender ideology (Marchi, 2020; Santos & Roque, 2021; Caldeira & Machado, 2023; Heyne & Manucci, 2021), abortion (Marchi, 2020; Heyne & Manucci, 2021) and supports traditional gender roles (Marchi, 2020; Martins & Cabrera, 2023; Heyne & Manucci, 2021; Santos & Roque, 2021). Some aspects regarding gender, however, have not been fully captured by the literature and so far no attention has been paid to how women members and supporters of the party and their own perceptions.

The empirical findings of this study will therefore provide a new understanding of the part played by gender in the Portuguese PRR party *Chega*, both from the perspectives of the party itself and its women members and supporters. As a divergence from the trend amongst European countries, the fact that few studies have yet tackled the relationship between a Portuguese PRR party and gender, and no previous study to this date has researched specifically the perspectives of the women who support *Chega*, make this case ideal for this research, particularly considering, as aforementioned, that PRR parties are often regarded by voters as protest parties, attracting voters and members who do not fully agree with the party in all its views, expectedly including the ones on gender. This research will therefore be able to engage in this question on a reduced and in-depth scope, contributing to advancing the understanding of the intersections between gender and PRR parties.

## 5. Methodology

This chapter details the methodological process of this dissertation. After this introductory segment, the chapter divides itself into two subsections. The first refers to the presentation of the dimensions in which the data will be divided into, and which are central to this study. Subsequently, the second section presents further information and justification on the data collection and the types of data analyzed on this research, specifically the *Chega* official documents, the interviews and non-participant observation.

As expanded previously, this dissertation aims to answer the following research question: “To what extent do the gender perspectives of women members and supporters of *Chega* align with the official views of the party?”. This question opens way for two more questions to be analyzed in the context of this research. The first one is “What are the official views of the party *Chega* on gender-based subjects?”. In order to address this, the methodology chosen was Qualitative Document Analysis. The second additional question is “What are the views of the women supporters and members of *Chega* on gender-based subjects?”, which will be addressed through interviews. An ethnographic incursion and content analysis of speeches at a *Chega* youth event complement the analysis, as it involves both the sharing of opinions by a woman member of the party, as well as constituting an official event of the national *Chega* youth section, thus aiding in responding to both questions.

Through this choice of research instruments, it is also possible to address the research question by, as developed earlier, comparing the official public stances of the party present on the party documents to the views presented at a semi-public party event by a prominent female member of the party, and, lastly, to the views women members and supporters expressed privately on the interviews. This will allow for a richer contribution to the literature on this topic, not only exploring the alignment between *Chega* and its women members and supporters on gender-based subjects but drawing conclusions on party heterogeneity.

The core of the methodology of this study is, therefore, qualitative research. The choice of this approach is based on the key objectives of this dissertation, which focuses on understanding values, attitudes, ideologies and behaviors, both the ones established by PRR parties and those of its members and supporters. By choosing a qualitative approach, it is understood that the problem at hand can best be comprehended when considering its particular context and following an inductive logic. Understanding if and how the gender-based perspectives of the Portuguese party *Chega* and those of its women members and supporters align, allows for the recognition of patterns which can be more broadly applicable (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The specific techniques followed will be presented and justified in the second subsection of this dissertation.

### 5.1. Data Analysis Dimensions

In order to explore the extent of the alignment of the perspectives of *Chega* and their women members and supporters in gender-based subjects, it is necessary to firstly explore what exactly is considered a gender-based subject. It must be noted that every social and political phenomenon is inevitably gendered, and gender norms are intrinsic to both our everyday lives and the institutions which shape our society (Enloe, 2000). Nonetheless, there are gendered subjects and concepts which have been more extensively addressed by PRR parties, as analyzed in the literature review. Indeed, this literature review has shaped the dimensions which will be analyzed in this research, which are further explained in Table 1 below. De Lange and Mügge (2015) in their efforts to understand how ideology shapes PRR parties' perspectives on gender differentiate classic gender issues, such as reproductive rights and work-life balance, from more recent issues such as immigration and Islam. Meguid et al. (2022) on the other hand, focus their research on women's issues and their presence in PRR parties' manifestos, emphasizing three categories: gender equality, violence against women and work-family balance. The dimensions of both studies (De Lange & Mügge, 2015; Meguid et al., 2022) mostly align with what is currently known on PRR parties' views of gender and that have been presented in the literature review section of this dissertation: more traditional views of gender equality, an opposition to reproductive rights such as abortion, femonationalist stances regarding immigration and Islam and advocate for stronger sentences for perpetrators of forms of violence that highly affect women.

Besides the aforementioned subjects, further ones were explored based on the literature. One of the most prevalent subjects of discussion on gender within PRR parties is undoubtedly LGBTQ+ rights, which as discussed previously, PRR parties tend to hold conservative beliefs on. Lastly, the two final dimensions are connected to gender and antigender movements and countermovements: whilst, as expanded before, the feminist movement has grown enormously, prompting the implementation of gender-equal policies around the world in the past decades, a countermovement has emerged, opposing feminist and LGBTQ+ movements and fighting for the end of the so-called gender ideology (Corredor, 2019). Both feminism and gender ideology are highly discussed topics by European PRR parties, as detailed when analyzing the relevant literature to this research. In sum, this analysis focuses on eight dimensions, which can further provide an extensive and holistic understanding of how gender is perceived within PRR parties and will be utilized in the analysis of all three research instruments presented in the next section.



Table 1: Characterization and contextualization of the dimensions in analysis

Literature Context	Dimension	Explanation
Classic Gender Issues (De Langue & Mugge, 2015)	Gender Equality	In this dimension are included statements that touch on the idea of gender equality, the need (or lack thereof) of achieving it, and the proposal of gender equal policies on a general level.
	Work-Family Balance	In this dimension are included statements that mention gendered notions of the role of the family, as well as aspects of work-life and family balance, such as childcare, domestic work, gendered division of labor and the gender wage gap.
	Reproductive Rights	In this dimension are included statements regarding abortion, birth control, pregnancy and overall sexual and reproductive health and rights.
Violence Against Women (Meguid et al., 2022)	Gender-based violence	In this dimension are included statements about the multiple forms of violence, such as physical, sexual and domestic violence and its intersections with gender.
Gender and Immigration (De Langue & Mugge, 2015)	Femonationalism	In this dimension are included statements against immigration from a nationalist perspective of protection of native women's rights and freedoms.
Sexuality and Minority rights (Meguid et al., 2022)	Sexuality and Gender Minorities	In this dimension are included statements regarding the LGBTQ+ community, both concerning the community in general, and more specifically transgender and nonbinary rights.
Gender Movements and Countermovements (Corredor, 2019)	Gender Ideology	In this dimension are included statements that express views about gender ideology and its impact on society.
	Feminism	In this dimension are included statements that express views about the feminist movement globally and in Portugal, and its impact on society.

## 5.2. Analyzed Data: From formal to informal sources

Having introduced the dimensions through which gender-based perspectives will be examined, it is necessary to expand on the data utilized for these analyses and the techniques that were employed. Accordingly, three types of data were used: *Chega* official documents, the speeches delivered during a gender-focused party event and the content of semi-structured interviews with *Chega* members and supporters. As presented in the introduction, this study follows the structure of analyzing each research instrument from the most formal and official positions presented in the documents to the stances in the semi-public, more informal event and the highly spontaneous and informal interviews.

### 5.2.1. *Chega* official documents

In order to analyze *Chega*'s official ideologies and perspectives on gender-based subjects, a collection of official *Chega* documents was conducted. Table 2 below presents the eight documents chosen for this analysis, which were selected following two criteria: their

availability on the *Chega* website<sup>1</sup>, and the presence of both *Chega*'s political pledges and a description of the party's ideology on a general level, not focusing on one specific single area of action. This type of analysis is relevant in the sense that the party's goals, ideologies, values and priorities are inevitably present in its official documents. Indeed, the Party Manifesto and the Political Program are documents which accurately summarize party's positions, particularly within the context of the 2022 legislative elections and serve as the ideological ground of the party. The following documents, the Constitutional Revision, the Plan for National Salvation, the Manifesto for Europe, the Declaration of Principles, the 70 measures to rebuild Portugal and the 100 measures of governing, all fulfill the above-mentioned criteria.

Table 2: Characterization of the analyzed documents

Source of data	Characterization
Manifesto (2021) <sup>2</sup>	Short document stating the key aims and policies of the party
Political Program for the 2022 legislative elections <sup>3</sup>	Document stating the principles and ideological matrix of <i>Chega</i> , as well as its views on key areas of society – published in the context of the 2022 legislative elections
Constitutional Revision (2022) <sup>4</sup>	Project for a Constitutional Revision aiming for its “ideological cleanse”
Plan for National Salvation (2022) <sup>5</sup>	Document consisting of 20 policies deemed essential by <i>Chega</i> to save Portugal
Manifesto for Europe (2019) <sup>6</sup>	Document detailing <i>Chega</i> 's principles and policies regarding Europe published in the context of the 2019 European Parliament elections
Declaration of Principles <sup>7</sup>	Short document declaring <i>Chega</i> 's 13 main principles and its 4 goals
70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal (2019) <sup>8</sup>	Document consisting of 70 measures <i>Chega</i> aims to implement in order to rebuild Portugal
100 Measures of Governing (2022) <sup>9</sup>	Document consisting of 100 measures <i>Chega</i> aims to take to govern Portugal and restore dignity to the Portuguese people

<sup>1</sup><https://partidoChega.pt/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://partidoChega.pt/index.php/manifesto/>

<sup>3</sup> [https://partidoChega.pt/index.php/programa\\_politico/](https://partidoChega.pt/index.php/programa_politico/)

<sup>4</sup> <https://partidoChega.pt/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/revisao.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> [https://partidoChega.pt/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Plano\\_CH.pdf](https://partidoChega.pt/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Plano_CH.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://partidoChega.pt/index.php/manifesto-para-a-europa/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://partidoChega.pt/index.php/declaracao-principios/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://partidoChega.pt/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/70-MEDIDAS-PARA-REERGUER-PORTUGAL-CHEGA.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://partidoChega.pt/index.php/2022/01/12/as-100-medidas-de-governo-do-Chega/>

After this selection, a Qualitative Document Analysis (QDA) was conducted. QDA is a research method that handles data from documents containing text recorded without the researcher's involvement (Bowen, 2009). The main advantage of this method is its high usefulness in triangulation with other methods, such as interviews or non-participant observation (Bowen, 2009; Morgan, 2022; Wesley, 2020). In fact, QDA allows for a richer understanding of the studied reality, particularly within political studies, where the party's ideologies are most clearly described on their manifesto, political program and official documents (Rooduijn & Pauwels, 2011). Hence, the eight documents were read and examined, and all stances and expressions concerning any of the dimensions presented above were highlighted and further grouped in tables containing the information for each dimension, which are presented in Annex D, Table D1. The analysis of these documents through a gendered lens thus allows the drawing of conclusions regarding *Chega's* gender-based perspectives.

### **5.2.2. *Chega* youth event on Feminism**

To complement the document analysis and the qualitative interviews, I conducted a non-participant observation of an event organized by the national *Chega* youth section, titled "Feminism: Perversion & Subversion"<sup>10</sup>. Observation is a highly valued research technique in social sciences, and particularly within radical right groups and parties, as it allows for a deeper, first-hand understanding of how people interact and are involved within the group (Félix, 2015). Non-participant observation occurs when the researcher can take an observant role and witness the dynamics of the group, place or event at hand without disrupting its regular functioning (Ciesielska et al., 2018). In studying radical right parties and groups, observation is ideally employed in complementarity to other methods: "The varying combinations of life-history interviews, document analysis, participant observation, interviewing, and observational methods produce a rich and nuanced depiction of far-right groups, allowing insight into the often-surprising complexities of this world." (Blee, 2007, p.126). In fact, Blee (2020) argues these close-up studies done through ethnography and interviews can often provide more knowledge about women's dynamics in far-right groups than studies conducted from a distance, with the goal of recognizing general trends.

The event in question occurred on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2022, at 6pm at the Portuguese Parliament, and featured two speakers: Rita Matias, a Member of the Portuguese Parliament (MP) elected by *Chega* and Coordinator of the national *Chega* youth section, and Brazilian Member of the Federal Parliament Ana Campagnolo. Matias and Campagnolo have both publicly claimed themselves as anti-feminists, and the title of the event is a reference to

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<sup>10</sup> In Portuguese: "Feminismo, Perversão e Subversão"

Campagnolo's book about her opposition to feminism. This event was publicized on *Chega's* social media and had free entrance, though participants were asked to register online and await e-mail confirmation from the party. During my observation, I aimed to perceive not just the interventions from the presenters, their discourses, arguments in the context of my own research, but also the demographics of the audience and the level of interaction between the public and the speakers before, during and after the lecture.

Though an ethnographical observation of the full event has been conducted, within the context of this dissertation, I have chosen to focus my analysis on the statements made by MP Rita Matias. Since this research is focused on women members and supporters of *Chega's* gender perceptions, MP Rita Matias's intervention is undoubtedly the richest in this context. As a member of the party, Matias presented her views on gender and feminism to a public who generally seemed extremely supportive of said views and *Chega* as a whole, in two different interventions of a total of 18 minutes. This was only a small portion of the event that had the duration of 1 hour 31 minutes, as most time was dedicated to the Brazilian MP's intervention. In addition to the notes taken during the observation, I have relied on the recording of the event, which was posted on *Chega's* website and Youtube page<sup>11</sup>, which I further used in order to transcribe the aforementioned interventions. In sum, a content analysis of *Chega's* MP's speeches will be conducted in tandem with the *Chega* documents and interviews. However, besides this content analysis of the speeches, the last section of the analysis chapter will provide additional analyses which were not covered by the gender-based dimensions, containing further ethnographic notes on the event as a whole, relying on the subjective non-participant observation.

### **5.2.3. Interviews with *Chega* members and supporters**

Whilst the employing of QDA as a research technique allows the exploring of the official *Chega* views regarding gender-based subjects, interviews and their subsequent content analysis are the prime technique to understand the gender perspectives of women members and supporters of the party. Qualitative interviews aim to comprehend the meaning of their respondents' experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2011; Warren, 2002; Weiss, 1995). In social sciences, qualitative interviews are a powerful tool, analyzed through interpretation, summary and quotations, with the ultimate aim of grasping respondents' perspectives in a deeper manner, thus relying on smaller samples (Weiss, 1995). The choice of this research technique arises in the analysis of the relevant literature, particularly the studies focused on women's involvement in PRR parties. On one of the key studies on women's presence in

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<sup>11</sup> Link to the recording of the event: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yy7AB97zsqU> (accessed on August 10<sup>th</sup> 2023)

extreme right groups in the USA, Blee (1996) clarifies the importance of utilizing interviews in this context: “They provide an in-depth look at the self-perceptions, motivations and understandings of women at different levels of involvement in racist and anti-Semitic groups” (Blee, 1996, p.688). Similarly, Félix (2015) researching women’s role in Greek and Hungarian far-right parties, Mulinari and Neergard (2017) researching women’s discursive tendencies in Swedish PRR parties and Geva (2018) researching gendered symbolism in a French PRR party, all conducted qualitative interviews.

Furthermore, this research includes individual online semi-structured interviews: the interview script included a set of pre-prepared questions (which is presented in Annex A Table A1), however, efforts were made to create open dialogue between the interviewer and interviewee when opportunity arose (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The interview script consisted of a set of introductory questions, followed by eight sections corresponding to the dimensions of analysis presented above, as well as an additional section regarding the interviews’ perceptions of *Chega*’s views on gender, ending on a debriefing section (Annex B), as indicated by the Iscte-IUL Code of Conduct.

Regarding the interview process, the target group for the interviews was women who were involved in national or district bodies of the party *Chega*, as well as those who identified themselves as an active supporter/signatory of the party [*militante*, in Portuguese]. When first contacting the participants, they were asked whether they were members or supporters of the party, and at the start of the interview, the participants were once again asked about their relationship with the party, in order to guarantee they held a strict relationship with *Chega* and were not simply sympathizers. To reach women within the target group, different strategies were employed. The national and district bodies of *Chega* were contacted by e-mail, where this research was explained, and where they were inquired on whether any woman member of that body would be available to be interviewed. One interview was arranged due to this strategy. Additionally, names of women members of the national bodies of *Chega*, which were available at their website, were collected, and were reached out through their social media (Facebook/Instagram) pages and attempted contact through there. Furthermore, and due to the unfruitfulness of the previous strategies, *Chega*’s Instagram and Facebook pages was consulted, where social media profiles of women who left supportive comments on *Chega*’s posts or were tagged in the social media pages of district/regional bodies and youth sections of the party were found and contacted. This direct contact through social media proved to be the most fruitful strategy, as seven interviews were arranged through this method. Throughout the entire process of contacting potential interviewees, 53 women were contacted, though only nine women total responded positively and arranged an interview. Moreover, the snowball sampling technique was attempted, as vastly

recommended in qualitative interview studies (Noy, 2008), though only one interview was arranged due to a referral from another respondent. Due to a wide variety of locations of the interviewees, the interviews were conducted online, through the Zoom platform. The interviewees were informed of Iscte's Code of Conduct, read and accepted the Iscte Consent Form (presented in Annex B) and had the opportunity to ask questions and retract their consent. The personal data collected from the interviews underwent a process of pseudonymization and their personal identity was carefully handled on this dissertation, being further identified as Interviewee (I) 1-9 (Class et al., 2021).

It must be noted that the choices made in the process of contacting potential interviewees inevitably influenced the demographic reached in this study. It was significantly easier, due to their presence on social media, to reach younger people, particularly since the regional/district youth sections of *Chega* are quite active on social media. Though there was an attempt to reach an older demographic, the oldest person to be interviewed was 44 years old, the youngest being 19. The average age of the interviewees was 33 years old. Moreover, seven of the nine interviewees were Portuguese, whilst two were Brazilian women living in Portugal. Of the nine interviewees, and following the European Union's Nomenclature of territorial units for statistics (NUTS II), two interviewees lived in the North of Portugal, one in the Center, two in the Lisbon area, one in Alentejo, two in the Algarve region and one in the Madeira archipelago. Regarding the interviewees' ties to the party *Chega*, two women were coordinators of regional/district bodies of the party, three were coordinators of regional/district bodies of *Chega*'s youth section, one woman was a member of *Chega*'s national bodies, one was a member (militante) of the party and two classified themselves simply as "supporters". To protect their identity, particularly those of party coordinators who due to their more prominent role in the party could be more easily identifiable, they will be further identified in the analysis chapter of this dissertation only as a supporter of *Chega* or a member of regional/district or national bodies. The interviews lasted between 19 minutes to 1 hour 18 minutes, with an average length of 54 minutes, and were all conducted in the Portuguese language, subsequently manually translated. These details of the interviews and interviewees are further displayed in Annex C, Table C1.

## 6. Analyzing Gender Perspectives: Chega & its women

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected from *Chega's* official documents, interviews with women members and supporters and the *Chega* youth event on Feminism. It is structured in sections representing every dimension in analysis. Each section firstly analyses the stances present in *Chega's* official documents on the dimension at hand, followed by the views presented on the *Chega* youth section event, and the data extracted from the interviews, concluding by contrasting the three sources. It must be noted that though all of the dimensions have been considered in relevant literature of this subject, it is natural that the amount of information extracted from the three sources (*Chega's* official documents, *Chega* youth section event and the interviews) is varied, and some dimensions are inevitably more expanded and have more varied information than others. Regarding the analysis of the documents, it is also relevant to stress that multiple documents include the same phrases of expressions word for word. To avoid redundancies, the full analysis of each document is included in table form in the Annex D, Table D1, as well as the analysis of the event (Annex D, Table D2), and interviews (Annex D, Tables D3-D11) according to each dimension. After the analyses per dimension, this chapter closes with an analysis of each of data sources, providing final considerations regarding the documents, interviews, and some ethnographic notes on the *Chega* youth event.

### 6.1. Gender Equality

The Gender Equality dimension, as aforementioned, refers to statements that touch on the idea of gender equality, the need (or lack thereof) of achieving it, and the proposal of gender equal policies on a general level.

Analyzing the eight official *Chega* documents, it is worth noting that only two documents referred to gender equality in general or specific gender-equal policies: the 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal (containing three references) and the 100 Measures of Governing (containing two references). In these documents, *Chega* proposes a system of true gender equality, fostered by merit and acknowledgement of men and women's differences:

*"[Chega proposes the] Repeal of the Gender and Equality Law, and as an alternative, the creation of a true Law of equality between men and women!" – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal*

*"Promote true social equality between women and men, definitively closing the door to all ideological stigmas and dogmas that have been exacerbated in recent years and have greatly contributed to gender conflicts, valuing and respecting the uniqueness of each human being, acknowledging the natural differences between women and men,*

*not as a source of problems, but as a rich universe of added value.*” – 100 Measures of Governing

Regarding what *Chega* considers as gender-equal policies, the party proposes the suppression of the Parity Law and quota policies which establish gender parity on the access to a series of roles and vacancies, and supports the creation of a domestic violence law that equally protects men and women:

*“Suppression of the Parity Law and any type of quota policies. We defend a fair society and not based on discrimination, we defend a society based on merit, where the best will not be harmed by the mediocre!”* – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal

*“Promotion of a domestic violence law that equally protects the elderly, men, women and children.”* – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal & 100 Measures of Governing

Turning the attention to the analyzed interventions at the *Chega* Youth Section Event, the *Chega* MP Rita Matias, clarifies the party’s views on gender and gender equality, stating: “[*Chega*] defends both the women and the men, without shying away from saying what is a woman and what is a man.” Here, we obtain a note-worthy perspective on how the party views this topic. While there is a reference to an equal defense of men and women, which could be perceived as gender equality, the MP refers to a bold attitude of the party to recognize that there are clear distinctions between a man and a woman and that they cannot be completely equal, and instead, complement each other – an idea present in the *Chega* documents and validated by the MP’s following statement: “*We can affirm the obvious. A man is a man, a woman is a woman, and there is nothing more beautiful than their complementarity.*”. Additionally, the concept of gender equality can be differently interpreted: while it is widely considered that gender is a spectrum and therefore one’s concept of gender equality includes equality amongst people who identify with any gender, individuals with a more traditional perspective on the matter may interpret gender equality as strictly equality between a man and a woman. The latter perspective is, indeed, the one present in the interventions at this event, as the speaker also uses the term sex, claiming she is avoiding saying the word gender altogether: “*...sex, as to not say gender*”. Overall, strong conservative views are presented regarding gender and gender equality in the analyzed interventions, which are better illustrated by the closing remarks of the first speech made by the *Chega* MP: “*The values we [in *Chega*] defend are the ancestral values, so we just need to grab this with strength, faith and determination and come back to our origins.*” This idea of ancestral values and return to the origins inevitably relates to a wish for the return of traditional gender roles and a more conservative belief on men and women’s role in society.



The data gathered from the interviews with women members and supporters of *Chega* generally corroborate the perspectives presented at the event. Firstly, when asked about their definition of gender, eight out of nine interviewees equated gender to sex, and thus considered gender equality to be the equality strictly between a man and a woman. When asked about their concept of gender equality and if that equality existed in Portugal, respondents majorly fit into three groups. The first group includes four women who claimed gender equality was already a reality in Portugal, seeing as men and women have the same rights guaranteed by the law, as demonstrated by the following statements:

*"We need to perceive equality according to the law. Be it a man, woman or whatever they identify, according to the law we are already equal."* – I1 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

*"We can vote, we can work, we can apply for upper positions at our jobs, we can do a masters, a PhD, we can do whatever we want to. What can't we do that men can? Nothing."* – I3 (Member of a *Chega* regional/district body)

The second group refers to two women who, though believing that men and women have different roles in society, consider that gender equality should exist but has not yet been reached in all levels. Women with this type of response mentioned, for instance, income inequality and gender discrimination.

*"Recent studies mention, for instance, a striking inequality in the access to high positions, board positions, where there are salary inequalities. I think that's the path of gender equality and equality of opportunity we should walk towards."* – I6 (Member of a *Chega* national body)

*"There is still gender discrimination. I have felt discriminated for being a woman at my university."* – I9 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

The third group is composed of three women who consider gender equality to be fake, wrong or not an objective to be attained, expressing a common perspective that if men and women are different biologically, their privileges, rights and abilities should also differ.

*"There are some privileges for women and others for men, we are not equal to men and I don't want to be. I like being a woman, I don't want to be equal to a man."* – I5 (*Chega* Supporter)

*"Gender equality is a social construct that came to confuse people's minds."* – I9 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

*“I don’t believe that men and women should be equal. We can do different things and we need different things to get to different places.” – I7 (Member of a Chega youth section).*

Summarizing the three analyses, it is clear that *Chega* claims to defend an equality between men and women, however, in its goal to repeal the current Gender Equality Law and replace with a “true equality” law, no references are made to what that equality would entail and how it would be achieved. Both the views presented at the event and from the interviews demonstrate a clear conservative position regarding gender equality. Though two interviewees considered the existence of gender inequalities and stated that policies should be implemented to improve them, the other seven respondents either opposed the concept in its entirety or opposed existing or future gender equal policies, as gender equality is already guaranteed under the law. All interviewees except one considered gender to be an unnecessary term as it is equivalent to sex, an idea which was corroborated by the speaker at the event. A definite trend in the three sources is the idea of complementarity and acknowledgment of differences between men and women, rather than their equality.

## **6.2. Work-Family Balance**

This dimension includes statements which mention gendered notions of work-life and family balance, such as childcare, domestic work, gendered division of labor and the gender wage gap. General ideas of the role of the family have also been considered in the analysis of this dimension, as to provide context on the concept of gendered Work-Family Balance.

This issue is addressed by numerous *Chega* official documents. It is worth noting that family is heavily mentioned in the party documents, as the “natural family”, meaning a mother, a father and children are considered the foundation of society itself and which should return to the central role it belongs to, as illustrated in the following examples:

*“Chega (...) considers the natural family, based on the intimal relationship between a man and a woman, a psychosociological and socioeconomic reality previous to the State, historically stable and humanely irreplaceable. In it, life is transmitted, as well as a set of affective, emotional and behavioral balances, and knowledge, traditions and heritage which sustain dignity and prosperity of individuals and peoples.” – Political Program*

*“Unequivocal defense of the Family as the original and fundamental cell of the entire Portuguese social structure.” – 100 Measures of Governing*

Additionally, *Chega* extensively refers to the creation of policies to support maternity, natality and provide more benefits to families, with a focus on large families. These measures

are described in the Manifesto for Europe, 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal and 100 Measures of Governing, in a total of twelve references to the role of the family or the extension of benefits and leaves regarding work-family balance:

*“An articulate set of policies supporting maternity, similarly to other Member-States, such as the extension of the period of child support, such as birth licenses, ample fiscal benefits for couples with 2 or more children, etc.”* – Manifesto For Europe

*“Valuing the role of motherhood and fatherhood in Portuguese families, ensuring a phased increase over 4 years in parental leave, with longer temporary deadlines, especially when children with disabilities and/or special needs are involved.”* – 100 Measures of Governing

On the *Chega* youth section event, references to work-family balance and its gendered dynamics were not made. However, it is pertinent to state that two references were made in the analyzed interventions highlighting, in the words of MP Rita Matias: *“The commitment of our party to defend the values of the Family.”*, and asking the public to *“create pro-life, pro-family, pro-women NGOs, occupy that space, it cannot just be up to the Left to do it”*. It is therefore clear that a conservative and traditional view of the family is perceived both in the documents and the event.

The women members and supporters of *Chega* interviewed provided a more nuanced perspective on this topic. Though two women held a more traditional perspective of the family and the role of men and women in it, three others recognized the burden of gendered labor in domestic tasks and the need for better policies, as demonstrated in the following excerpts, the first being one of the more traditional perspectives, and the second being less traditional and striving for equal policies:

*“The man is supposed to take care of the family in monetary aspects, and women should take care of the house, of the child, that’s what happens in nature. That’s what happens in my house.”* – I1 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

*“My job is triple. I have my job, I’m a mom and a housewife, and I’m a member of Chega (...) Women do face a double working day and we need policies and support to manage it.”* – I8 (Member of a *Chega* regional/district body)

Regarding their views on work-family balance itself and how it is managed in Portugal, a large majority of respondents (eight out of nine women) characterized it as difficult or a problem in society. Their perspectives on specific policies was less consensual – whilst some women argued that current policies on this matter have been ineffective and supported larger

benefits for families, as demonstrated by the first excerpt presented below, others considered current policies enough and helpful, as seen in second excerpt:

*“There are no effective public policies that allow women to balance their family and professional lives. We fought so much for gender equality but there are no policies (...) to incentivize maternity, (...) to promote life quality.”* – I6 (Member of a *Chega* national body)

*“The State has had an important role guaranteeing subsidies (...), I, myself, had the family allowance which really helped me financially.”* – I3 (Member of a *Chega* regional/district body)

One perspective that was present in the interviews and which was not addressed on the event or in any of the official documents in analysis was the difficulties of women in particular balancing work and family life, particularly regarding income inequality and women-specific difficulties, as pointed out by four respondents and illustrated below:

*“Nowadays it feels like you’re either a mother or you have a career.”* – I7 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

*“In middle and lower classes, I believe mothers end up overloading with financial burdens.”* – I4 (*Chega* Supporter)

What is gathered from the analysis of this dimension is that the topic of work-family balance is extremely developed by *Chega*’s official documents, particularly on the aim of extending childcare, natality and family benefits. In contrast, the women interviewed, though sharing a near consensus on this issue affecting society negatively, had varied perspectives on whether current policies were sufficient, unlike the official position of the party which is of a clear attempt to create more effective policies. They also spoke on the gendered elements of work-family balance and how its lack thereof disproportionately affects women, which was not mentioned in the party documents. It is also noteworthy that in both the documents and the event, traditional views of the family and its central role in society were a key point, while in the interviews more heterogeneity on this matter was found, demonstrating a contrast between the views of the party and those of its women members and supporters.

### **6.3. Reproductive Rights**

As presented previously, this dimension includes statements regarding abortion, contraceptive methods, pregnancy and overall sexual and reproductive health and rights. As far as the official documents are concerned, *Chega* makes a total of five references to these topics, in three different documents: its Manifesto, the 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal and

the 100 Measures of Governing. It must be noted that two of these are the same sentence, simply presented in different documents. Out of these five references, one refers to the expansion of prenatal benefits, with a focus on large families:

*“Promoting the expansion of the beneficiary base for prenatal family allowance, guaranteeing an increase of no less than 50% for the second child and 100% for the third and subsequent children.”* – 100 Measures of Governing

The other four references are explicitly referring to abortion and *Chega*’s opposition to accessible abortion services included in the National Health Service and the stressing of further alternatives to abortion to be established.

*“Chega came to refuse. Refuse what is today taken as normal patterns (...) Refuse the abortion-at-demand (..) paid by the taxpayers.”* – Manifesto

*“Eliminate from public health exemptions all surgical interventions not related to health, such as sex changes and abortion (except cases of rape, malformation or others that endanger the woman’s life)”* – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal & 100 Measures of Governing

*“It is also essential that women with unexpected or unwanted pregnancies have information, assistance and genuine alternatives.”* – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal

The analyzed interventions at the *Chega* event, however, contain less references to this topic. Though abortion was lengthily criticized by the Brazilian speaker, *Chega*’s MP made solely one reference to abortion, when mentioning the need for the public to come together and create, among other characteristics, pro-life NGOs – this term pertaining to anti-abortion beliefs: *“We need you to be militants, to create pro-life, pro-family, pro-women NGOs, occupy that space, it can’t just be up to the Left to occupy it”*.

Turning now to the analysis of the interviews, when asked about policies to be implemented regarding reproductive rights as a whole, the voluntary interruption of a pregnancy was indubitably the most referenced topic, and two contrasting perspectives were found. A majority of the women, five in total, expressed a complete opposition to abortion, with no exceptions, as exemplified by the following two statements:

*“I am pro-life. From conception there is life, and you own your body but there’s another body inside yours and you need to respect that life. You don’t want it? Well, give it up for adoption.”* – I8 (Member of a *Chega* regional/district body)

*“Abortion is not a reproductive right, it’s not a woman’s right (...) There are a lot of other methods, one of them being closing your legs.”* – I7 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

On the other hand, four women showed a more favorable position to the right to abortion. Of those four women, two of them stated that they support the current abortion law as it stands, where women can abort for any reason until the tenth week of pregnancy, while the other two expressed they support the right to abort but would prefer a limit to be established on how many abortions a woman could do per year:

*"I don't know how to justify it, but I think we have the right to choose to have a baby or not."* – I3 (Member of a *Chega* regional/district body)

*"It's the woman that will have to bear the child for 9 months and the decision is only hers. No one else's."* – I5 (*Chega* Supporter)

*"I think, Okay, something unexpected happened, and I want to have an abortion. Alright, you should have the right, I don't know, to two abortions. More than that, the situation should be assessed. And ultimately, if I want to go through with it, I have to pay for it out of my own pocket."* – I4 (*Chega* Supporter)

Additionally, outside the question of abortion, two women considered that effective policies were already in place regarding contraceptive methods and reproductive health, as shown in the first statement below, and other two respondents mentioned the need for a strengthening of the National Health Services in order to help both pregnant women and couples wanting to conceive, illustrated by the second statement:

*"We currently have effective policies on birth control. Women can have access to the pill, men can have access to condoms in any medical center."* – I6 (Member of a *Chega* national body)

*"Women do not always have access to contraceptive methods, because they do not have access to the National Health Service. That is a big problem."* – I1 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

Overall, *Chega* does not present in its documents an outright refusal of the idea of abortion altogether, but an opposition to its practice, with the aforementioned exceptions, in the National Health Service, and therefore publicly financed, which translates into a disapproval of the current Portuguese abortion law. Five of the nine interviewees fit into the pro-life perspective also presented by MP Rita Matias at the event in analysis, whereas four women described their agreement with the right of abortion and all of them justified themselves, spontaneously stating their awareness of the fact that their views do not reflect those of the party in this particular topic. Indeed, this dimension is the one where two opposing views most clearly emerged in the interview data and where more respondents stated a disagreement with the party.

#### 6.4. Gender-Based Violence

As stated earlier, in this dimension are included statements made about multiple forms of violence, such as physical, sexual and domestic violence and its intersections with gender. It must be noted that even if no references to gender are made associated with those forms of violence, they are inherently gendered, as women and girls constitute the large majority of victims to these crimes worldwide and specifically in Portugal, where in 2022, 8 out of 10 domestic violence victims and 9 out of 10 sexual violence victims were women (Comissão para a Cidadania e Igualdade de Género, 2023). This is particularly relevant when analyzing the *Chega* official documents. Though the party rarely refers to gendered notions of violence, *Chega* references terms related to this dimension nine times in three documents: the Manifesto, 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal and 100 Measures of Governing (as occurred with the previous section, some references are the same, merely in different documents). The overall description of *Chega*'s views on these types of violence is a firm defense for stricter sentences against perpetrators. Domestic violence is mentioned four times, as *Chega* aims to promote legislation which ensures more effective protection of the victim, raise the crime's penal framework and establish protection mechanisms for victims of the most severe cases of violence:

*"Promote legislation that effectively guarantees the fight against domestic violence, increasing the penal framework for this type of crime and ensuring the effective protection of the elderly, men, women and children."* – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal & 100 Measures of Governing

*"In the most severe scenarios, legislate to ensure that victims of domestic violence are granted permission to change identity and establish legal mechanisms allowing them to benefit from tax, social, and banking pardons, among others."* – 100 Measures of Governing

Similarly, the party's proposed policies regarding crimes of sexual violence are focused on the stricter, more effective sentences for criminals:

*"Mandatory effective prison sentences for any crimes of rape, without the possibility of a suspended sentence"* – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal & 100 Measures of Governing

*"Introduction of legislation, in the Penal Code, on chemical castration as a form of punishment for sexual offenders, for anyone guilty of crimes of a sexual nature committed against minors under 16 years of age. In the first conviction, chemical castration is an option for those applying the sentence, in the second it will be mandatory. It can be cumulative with other penalties such as prison and is applied*

*when the aggressor is on probation.” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal & 100 Measures of Governing*

Furthermore, in two different documents, the party refers to the abolishment of practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM):

*“Chega proposes the abolishing of political and religious practices which offend the Portuguese juridical system and the European cultural roots (such as (...) female genital mutilation”– Manifesto & 100 Measures of Governing*

While multiple references to gendered types of violence can therefore be found in *Chega*’s documents, that is not the case for the analyzed interventions at the *Chega* event, as no mentions to this topic were made by the *Chega* MP. However, the data gathered from the interviews on this dimension is extensive. When asked about the existence of gender-based violence in Portugal, all of the interviewees stated that they believed men and women could be victims of violence, and though most of them acknowledge that the majority of the victims were women, many clarified their disagreement with current trends of portraying men as abusers and women as victims:

*“We should battle violence at its concept, and not create stigmas that men are aggressors and women are victims.” – I6 (Member of a Chega national body)*

*“We cannot forget that there is violence both from men to women and from women to men.” – I3 (Member of a Chega regional/district body)*

Regarding the combat of this violence itself, eight out of nine women considered that harsher and more effective sentences against perpetrators of these crimes were needed, just as defended by the party:

*“I support 25 years of prison for whoever kills, assaults, rapes, be it a man, woman or child, it doesn’t matter!” – I5 (Chega supporter)*

*“I wish the system was crueler to men who practice domestic violence (...) They should suffer in jail for much longer for what they did”. – I7 (Member of a Chega youth section).*

It is worth highlighting that when asked about gender-based violence, two women gave particularly emotional statements regarding their own personal experiences and their distrust in the current penal system, referring to *Chega* as the party who actually draws attention to this issue and defends stronger sentences. One interviewee expressed even that it was precisely *Chega*’s stance on this topic that drew her to the party, seeing as though she disagrees with multiple other party positions, she is extremely adamant in fighting for a



stronger penal system that effectively tackles domestic violence as to prevent other women from suffering the same fate as her:

*“What got me into Chega was the criminal part. Our legislation is very, very light, and I see it in my day-to-day, because I have been through situations where I felt very penalized as a woman, as a mother, and unfortunately nothing serious happened to my ex-partner.” – I4 (Chega supporter)*

What can be taken from this analysis is that the women members and supporters of *Chega* interviewed presented stances that went immensely in alignment with *Chega*’s official views: while the party defends a mandatory sentence for rapists, with no suspension of the sentence allowed, as well as the introduction of chemical castration as a punitive measure against perpetrators of sexual crimes and larger sentences for domestic violence perpetrators, nearly all interviewees supported stricter sentences. It is undeniably relevant to consider as well that this topic was the one where women spontaneously stated more alignment with the party.

## **6.5. Femonationalism**

This dimension, referring to Farris’s (2012) concept of femonationalism, connects to studies which suggest PRR parties reference gender equality and protection of native women’s rights and freedoms in order to justify keeping Muslim immigrants outside of their country (Sager & Mulinari, 2018). Accordingly, this section of the research aims to explore whether the party and its women members and supporters present femonationalist beliefs and stances.

On its official documents, *Chega* markedly defends a reform of the Portuguese immigration system and stricter control restrictions at the Portuguese borders. References to women’s rights or violent practices that affect women tied to *Chega*’s migratory proposals are made four times, all of them containing identical statements referring to the abolishing of cult spaces which promote practices that offend Portuguese culture and juridical system or practice crimes against women, promote the Sharia Law, female genital mutilation and forced marriage of minors:

*“Chega defends a migratory system that monitors and compulsively abolishes cult spaces which directly or indirectly promote behaviors incompatible to the western identity and culture (...) or any type of hate speech and incentive to religious or cultural practices which harm human dignity and crimes against women.” – Political Program*

*“Chega proposes the abolishing of political and religious practices which offend the Portuguese juridical system and the European cultural roots (such as (...)) the*

*application of the Sharia law, the female genital mutilation and forced marriages of minors” – Manifesto & 100 Measures of Governing & 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal*

These references to crimes against women tie into female genital mutilation and particularly the Sharia Law, a reference to Islamic sacred law which has also been heavily criticized by other PRR parties in Europe (Duina & Carson, 2020). This indubitably intersect with femonationalist stances connected to Muslim immigrants and nationalist perspectives, as *Chega* additionally proposes on its 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal, the creation of origin quotas for immigrants, (“giving priority to nationalities that share language and culture with Portugal.”)

On the analyzed interventions at the *Chega* youth section event, no femonationalist stances were found, seeing as the *Chega* MP did not mention immigration or violence against women in general. Seeing as the topic of the lecture was not related to immigration and that the analyzed interventions served as an introduction and final remarks to the event itself, it is worth noting that it was expected that not all gender-based issues of this research analysis are covered by the speaker.

Moving on to analyzing the perspectives of women members and supporters of *Chega*, it is noted that similarly to the stances held by the party, all nine interviewees expressed their concerns with the current immigration system and defended more restrictive policies. When asked whether more restrictions on immigration would have a positive effect on the defense of gender equality and women’s rights, two out of nine women did not show any signs of femonationalist discourse, whilst a majority of seven out of nine women directly pointed to a connection between Muslim immigrants and the increase in sexual violence and harassment in Portugal, as demonstrated by the first three excerpts below. A pattern is also identified regarding mentions of specific cases of violence by Muslim men working in ridesharing apps, as three interviewees touched on this subject and illustrated by the fourth statement below:

*“Men who enter from countries which treat the women badly, where they need to wear a veil, they think they can rape, hit and all that when they get here.” – I8 (Member of a Chega regional/district body)*

*“We try to combat gender inequality here and we have to fight against them. (...) I can see it in their eyes, they are used to women walking around covered and we don’t and they love it” – I9 (Member of a Chega youth section)*

*“Those countries where women have no rights, people from there should not even arrive here. They should arrive, we ask “What is your country?” They say that one, we say “I’m sorry, you won’t enter.”” – I5 (Chega supporter)*

*“Those Uber drivers, not all of them but some... a woman to them is like an old cloth that's been used and should be used again.” – I5 (Chega supporter)*

In summary, it has been demonstrated from this analysis that *Chega's* references to immigration and women's rights fall into the femonationalist tendencies witnessed in other European PRR parties – a perspective which seems to be highly corroborated by the majority of the interviewees, whose perspectives are even more discernibly femonationalist than those of the official *Chega* documents.

## **6.6. Sexuality and Gender Minorities**

The present dimension focuses on analyzed statements regarding the LGBTQ+ community, both concerning the community in general, and more specifically transgender and gender minority rights, which, as discussed in the literature review, are topics extensively addressed by PRR parties. Regarding *Chega's* official views present in the analyzed documents, as developed in the analysis of the Work-Family balance dimension, *Chega* demonstrated conservative views regarding the role of the family, which ties into this topic, seeing as *Chega* states in its Political Program:

*“Chega respects other different models of a shared life, however considers the natural family, based on the intimal relationship between a man and a woman, a psychosociological and socioeconomic reality previous to the State, historically stable and humanely irreplaceable. In it, life is transmitted, as well as a set of affective, emotional and behavioral balances, and knowledge, traditions and heritage which sustain dignity and prosperity of individuals and people.” – Political Program*

This statement, already explored in the Work-Family Balance section, also demonstrates that the prioritization of the natural family evidently comes at the expense of an inconsideration of other types of family, which are not referred to as family but “other different models of a shared life”. However, no other references are made regarding *Chega's* stance on matters of gay marriage or adoption, and the only direct mention to the LGBTQ+ community is made on the 70 Measures to Rebuild Portuguese, referring to *Chega's* proposal to abolish the community's agenda and propaganda at schools:

*“Prohibition of propaganda of the LGBTI agenda in the education system with the aim the application of inclusion ideologies and gender ideology in the national education system.” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal*

Lastly, three references are made in three different documents to transgender issues, in particular regarding sex change surgeries and their inclusion on the National Health Service:

*“Chega came to refuse (...) the SEX change surgeries paid by the taxpayers.” – Manifesto*

*“Eliminate from public health exemptions all surgical interventions not related to health, such as sex changes”– 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal & 100 Measures of Governing*

This overall conservative perspective regarding sexuality and gender minorities and their rights is endorsed by *Chega* MP Rita Matias at the event attended. The only mentions to this topic are made regarding transgender issues in the education system, as the MP remarks the need to fight against current laws being adopted. In particular, the laws referenced focus on mixed gender bathrooms, name changes in administrative processes at schools and the possibility of attending activities according to the gender the student identifies with. MP Rita Matias claims that *“from now on, boys who identify as women can now start to compete with women (...) if he identifies as a woman, he would start to be evaluated at school as a woman. And that would be unfair to all the other men who actually identify as men.”* The speaker goes on to tie this into the gender ideology agenda, which will be further expanded on the next section, but even in this excerpt it is clear that MP Rita Matias’ perspective is aligned to *Chega*’s opposition to LGBTQ+ issues within the education system, and that there is a biological perspective of gender and further equation of the term to sex, as the speaker defines students who identify as transgender girls as *“boys who now identify as women”*, indirectly referring to the idea that biologically they are still, and will always be boys.

Furthermore, the perspectives of women members and supporters of *Chega* also somewhat align with the data gathered from the documents and the event. When asked about their views on the current rights of the LGBTQ+ community, all women expressed the fact that LGBTQ+ currently have their rights guaranteed under Portuguese law and agreed they deserved equal rights. Of these nine women, eight of them stated, however, that they believed LGBTQ+ people nowadays want more rights and victimize themselves:

*“No one should be judged by their sexual option, but I don’t understand their big struggle. When I search for a job, no one asks me what my sexuality is.” – I2 (Chega supporter)*

*“This community is exaggerating a little, saying everything is against them, that they’re the victims and all of that. If they want to be equals, they need to act equal, not go on these marches and behaving badly.” – I5 (Chega supporter)*

Additionally, a majority of the women claim that the LGBTQ+ community discriminates traditional families and heterosexual people, and is infiltrating society, namely in education

where children are being turned against the traditional family and in healthcare where sex change surgeries are prioritized:

*“A heterosexual person that has a normal family ends up being discriminated against now.”* – I1 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

*“A sex change surgery shouldn’t have priority over a heart or brain tumor surgery... There is an inversion of basic values.”* – I8 (Member of a *Chega* regional/district body)

*“This shouldn’t be taught in schools (...) Now, children are taught the traditional family is wrong.”* – I6 (Member of a *Chega* national body)

To summarize the findings of this section, though the views expressed at the interviews are generally expressed in a more radical style than those presented at the event and the documents, it is clear that both the party and the interviewed women, as well as the event intervention, present an overall negative view of LGBTQ+ community’s activism and especially regarding transgender issues. Indeed, one issue which was striking and where complete alignment was found among the three sources is the LGBTQ+ community’s propaganda in schools – this subject will be further expanded on the next chapter, seeing as it heavily ties with the concept of gender ideology.

## **6.7. Gender Ideology**

As expanded on the literature, gender ideology has been a term extensively cited by PRR parties, and which is used as a rhetorical counterstrategy to discredit gender equality and gender mainstreaming and obstructs LGBTQ+ policies with the aim of returning to heteropatriarchal views of gender and sexuality (Corredor, 2019). Accordingly, this dimension includes statements that express views about this concept and its impact on society.

The term gender ideology is mentioned in four of the analyzed documents, in a total of six references. However, though multiple references are made, *Chega* does not extensively develop the notion of gender ideology or what it entails specifically. Three of the six references simply state the party’s opposition to this concept (illustrated by the first statement below), one reference is made on *Chega*’s Manifesto for the EP elections, stating that the European Union cannot be a transmitter of this agenda (as can be read on the second excerpt below), while the remaining two references highlight the need to stand against it at schools and universities (illustrated by the third statement):

*“Chega came to refuse. Refuse a lot of what today is taken as a pattern of normality. (...) Refuse the dictatorship of Gender Ideology”* – Manifesto

*“We demand an Europe whose innumerable bureaucratic instances do not behave as transmitters of cultural Marxism, abusive referees of what is politically correct or incorrect and ways of propagating the insufferable Gender Ideology, to the many member-states”. – Manifesto For Europe*

*“Prohibition of propaganda of the LGBTI agenda in the Portuguese teaching with the aim of applying the ideologies of inclusion and gender ideology in the national education system.” – 100 Measures of Governing*

Whilst on *Chega*’s official documents, direct references to the term gender ideology can be found, the concept is not referred by its name by the *Chega* MP at the *Chega* youth section event. Nevertheless, Matias makes two references to an agenda which is entering society through schools and universities, which unquestionably aligns with the perception presented by the party of gender ideology, claiming that this agenda *“invades every step, and a lot of the time we think some narratives that come up can be positive and have good intentions, but the truth is they don’t. It’s a very well-connected agenda.”*. Additionally, MP Rita Matias argues that in order to combat this agenda in Portugal, *“we need Chega to have more MPs, we need 50 MPs soon, maybe even an absolute majority. We need to occupy the other spaces (...) combat them at universities.”*

Not only is this idea of combating this ideology common to the official documents and the analyzed event, the women interviewed also corroborate this perspective. Firstly, it must be noted that though the term gender ideology is extensively referred by *Chega*, when asked to define gender ideology, four out of the nine women members and supporters of the party were not able to do so, displaying confused looks and/or unsurely defining it either as a synonym to gender equality or identity, or simply asking for clarification regarding what was meant by the question. Nevertheless, when clarified with how this term is regularly applied, the four women, as well as the five other interviewees who recognized and defined the term, all presented attitudes of total opposition to gender ideology and its agenda. Furthermore, eight out of nine women mentioned concern for how this propaganda is reaching children and schools.

*“The movement starts to get inside schools, universities and in time they will be everywhere and I believe we must take a stand.” – I2 (Chega supporter)*

*“Gender ideology has the goal of controlling the masses, indoctrinate people, make them not think for themselves.” – I7 (Member of a Chega youth section)*

*“Gender ideology imposes a view on the children (...) In the United States they’re having drag queens at schools, dancing and sexualizing themselves in front of children” – I9 (Member of a Chega youth section).*

When asked whether gender ideology should be combated, six women answered positively and mentioned *Chega*’s strong opposition to the creation of mixed gender bathrooms in schools, universities and other public places, as illustrated by the first two excerpts below. Contrastingly, two women referred that gender ideology does not need to be combatted and instead simply left alone to die on its own, demonstrated by the third excerpt below.

*“The thing with mixed bathrooms, I’m against it, and they [Chega] are right to be against them! (...) Any day I’ll go into the bathroom and there is a man who says he’s a woman and who knows what he will do to me!” – I5 (Chega supporter)*

*“Regarding that law project which I think will go through, of mixed bathrooms in all types of schools... Chega is completely against that, the same way that I am, for example.” – I4 (Chega supporter).*

*“Gender ideology does not need to be combatted. I just wanted to be left alone, you know? So I’ll just ignore it.” – I1 (Member of a Chega youth section)*

Summarizing this analysis, it is evident that an anti-gender ideology stance is found both on the official documents, the interventions at the event and the nine interviews, demonstrating an overall alignment between party views and individual perspectives of its women member and supporters. It is notable, however, that the documents do not develop the concept of gender ideology and how it effectively affects society, whereas the event goes further in this regard, evidently due to its more informal and discursive features. Similarly, the interviews displayed a strong stance on this matter, and though some interviewees initially lacked knowledge on the term itself, the beliefs it entailed were certainly held by all participants, and the question of gender ideology’s presence in schools was raised in all three source materials.

## **6.8. Feminism**

This dimension includes analyzed statements which express views about the feminist movement globally and in Portugal, and its impact on society. Unlike the previous sections, no specific references are made to the feminist movement in the *Chega* official documents. That is, however, certainly not the case regarding the analysis of the interventions at the *Chega* youth event. Referring back to the title of this event “Feminism: Perversion and Subversion”, it quite predicts the perspective of the speaker on this matter, who mentions

feminism throughout her intervention and considers it to be glasses put on us, which she claims “*distort our own vision and make us biased*” and which “*are not just put on us, they’re put in all of society.*” Feminism is also claimed to make women think and live as victims, and anti-feminists such as the Brazilian MP present at the event are the ones showing women their true freedom: “*it’s possible to look at nature and observe what was made for us, for our pleasure and not have to live like we are victims of something*”. MP Rita Matias argued as well that current society influenced by the feminist movement have told women they must hate men, referring that “*It’s important to state that women can admire men, without any complexes*” and that she, for example, admires the President of *Chega*, André Ventura. Overall, anti-feminism was the evident ideology at the center of the event in question and of the analyzed interventions.

Likewise, anti-feminism is also a pattern recognized in the analysis of the interviewees’ perspectives on the feminist movement. In fact, though three women considered that feminism was once good or had good intentions and origins, all nine women interviewed expressed negative reactions to feminism as it currently exists in society:

*“The feminist movement was so important in the early 19th century and now is completely subverting the ideals they fight for (...) Nowadays, being a feminist is just talking badly about men, doing abortions and showing their breasts.”* – I6 (Member of a *Chega* national body)

*“The feminist movement seems to have a good cause, but it’s a lie, it’s a façade. It gets engagement, popularity, likes and it leads to completely frustrated women.”* – I2 (*Chega* supporter)

*“I don’t feel like the feminist fights are adequate in our society.”* – I1 (Member of a *Chega* youth section)

Moreover, a common trend amongst the responses is the idea expressed by five women on feminists being men-haters and only supporting women who also endorse their own movement:

*“Men need women and women need men, this affects the family, affects society, affects everything, and that’s what they [feminists] want.”* – I8 (Member of a *Chega* regional/district body)

*“I am a feminine woman, I don’t relate to the feminist movement, I think the movement can be a little exaggerated... I mean, not exaggerated, but they’re always defending women’s rights and they sometimes forget men’s rights in society.”* – I4 (*Chega* supporter)



To summarize the analysis of the current dimension, it is necessary to state that since nothing is stated on this topic on the *Chega* official documents, it is not difficult to accurately conclude the level of alignment of the women members and supporters to the party on this matter. However, the views expressed at the event and interviews coincide greatly, as overall conservative and anti-feminist views are presented on both instances.

## **6.9. A Complementary Analysis**

Previous sections 6.1. to 6.8. reflect the central analysis of this research, explaining what data could be extracted from each data source (documents, event and interviews) on each of the analyzed dimensions. However, each of these sources are widely different from one another, displaying idiosyncrasies which are relevant to be explored separately to the analysis of each dimension. Therefore, subsections 6.9.1 and 6.9.2 explore some final analyses of the documents and interviews respectively, seeing as extremely relevant information can be extracted from these sources in a transversal and holistic manner. Subsection 6.9.3., on the other hand, provides insights on the *Chega* youth event where the afore-analyzed speeches were made. As opposed to the previous sections where only the content of said speeches were analyzed, this subsection will feature an ethnographic incursion and provide general conclusions on the event as a whole.

### **6.9.1. *Chega* Official Documents**

Starting with the *Chega* official documents, it is worth noting that the eight documents chosen for this study adhered to the criteria of containing *Chega*'s political pledges while simultaneously covering the party's general ideological views. A significant finding was the fact that no data was found regarding gender-based perspectives on any of the analyzed dimensions in three different documents: the Constitutional Revision, the Plan for National Salvation and the Declaration of Principles. In fact, as can be seen in the table below, out of the 47 total references made to gender-based subjects found on this study, a majority of 33 of them are found on two documents: 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal and 100 Measures of Governing. It is important to denote that these are the two documents least accessible on the *Chega* website – though they are published on the website, they are not included in its "Documents" section, unlike the other analyzed documents: this means that almost half of the references to gender-based subjects are not as easily available to the public. Indeed, in contrast to the 70 Measures and 100 Measures documents, fewer references are made on the Manifesto (six references) and Political Program (five references), these two types of documents being the more widely examined in qualitative analysis of party documents (Merz et al., 2016).

Table 3: Number of references to each dimension per document

Official Document / Dimension in Analysis	Mani-festo	Political Program 2021	Constitutional Revision	Plan for National Salvation	Mani-festo for Europe	Declaration of Principles	70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal	100 Measures of Governing	Total references per dimension	% of references of each dimension
Gender Equality	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	5	10.6%
Work-Family Balance	0	3	0	0	2	0	2	6	13	26.6%
Reproductive Rights	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	5	10.6%
Gender-Based Violence	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	9	19.1%
Feminism	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	8.5%
Sexuality and Gender Minorities	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	5	10.6%
Gender Ideology	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	6	12.7%
Feminism	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Total references per document	6	5	0	0	3	0	14	19	47*	100%

The table above also leads us to obtain striking conclusions regarding the salience of these subjects in the party's documents<sup>12</sup>: Work-Family Balance is the most mentioned topic, followed by Gender-Based Violence and Gender Ideology. With the exception of Feminism, which as previously stated, is not referred to in the documents, the remaining dimensions all contain four to five total references each. Some of the main conclusions from the analysis of the documents therefore include *Chega's* high focus on preserving the values of the natural family and traditional gender roles, the party's pursue to defending women's rights through establishing a stricter penal system and higher protection of victims of sexual and domestic violence, and its strict opposition to gender ideology and the LGBTQ+ agenda in schools.

### 6.9.2. Interviews with *Chega* members and supporters

The interviews represent the vital instrument which allowed the exploring of the alignment between the women members and supporters and their supported party's stances on gender and that will allow the research question to be answered. Throughout the analysis of each dimension, some conclusions were highlighted regarding the alignment of the interviewees with the party in each subject.

Seeing as the interviews followed the structure of the gender-based dimensions examined in this dissertation, the key elements of their analysis are the ones present in the sections on each dimension. However, the interviewees were also asked about their own

<sup>12</sup> Some phrases contained information pertaining to different dimensions and therefore were considered as separate stances in this table.

perception of alignment with the party in gender-based subjects, providing insights which will help answer this research's main question. Firstly, to summarize the interviews' findings, the subjects in which women displayed most similar perspectives to the party documents were Gender-Based Violence, Gender Ideology and Sexuality and Gender Minorities. Alternatively, Work-Family Balance and Reproductive Rights are the two dimensions in which the interviewees presented more heterogeneous perspectives, various of them contrary to those of the party. Regarding the issue of work-family balance, multiple women did not display the traditional family values so heavily addressed by *Chega*, and different views were also found regarding the effectiveness of work-family balance policies. Similarly, regarding reproductive rights, where abortion was the central concept of the discussion, two opposing perspectives were witnessed, this being, as afore-mentioned, the most divisive subject. The heterogeneity of the interviews on this dimension hence represents a lack of alignment with the party.

This mentioned heterogeneity is validated by the aforementioned question on whether the interviewees identified themselves with *Chega's* views on gender-based subjects. On this matter, six out of the nine women claimed to fully agree with *Chega* in these matters, one claimed to agree almost in full, and two to mostly agree. In answering this question, most women highlighted their agreement with *Chega's* fight against gender ideology and violence against women, whereas all three women who did not express their full agreement mentioned the issue of abortion, where they claimed to stand away from the party's official position. It is relevant to mention that this evidently refers to their own perceptions, which did not automatically match with the actual alignment examined. Indeed, an interesting finding on this matter was that though this analysis demonstrated some of alignment regarding work-family balance, which is also *Chega's* most mentioned dimension in the analyzed documents, no women referred to any *Chega's* proposed policies regarding this topic when asked about *Chega's* views on all of the dimensions. This could suggest this topic is less prioritized by the interviewed women, than it is by the party. All of these findings are illustrated in the tables of analysis D3-11 presented in Annex D, where further information can be consulted.

### **6.9.3. *Chega* youth event on Feminism**

The "Feminism: Perversion and Subversion" event organized by the national youth section of *Chega* provides some striking complementary findings to the other research instruments, particularly considering that the analysis of the *Chega* documents was not able to obtain any results regarding *Chega's* stance on the feminist movement. Evidently, though the beliefs presented by the Brazilian MP cannot be directly linked to *Chega*, which is why the interventions analyzed were those of the *Chega* MP Rita Matias, the fact that the party chose to associate itself to anti-feminism and the devaluing of the fight for gender equality

must be considered. Having analyzed the interventions through content analysis according to the dimensions, some brief personal considerations and ethnographic notes on this non-participant observation will now be provided. Firstly, I recognize the inherent subjectivity of the observation technique and the impossibility of separating the researcher, their viewpoints and background from the reality being researched: the following notes are presented according to my own perception of each element of the event at hand (Powdermaker, 1966). Despite this inherent subjectivity to this method, I extensively studied and prepared this observation, following the instructions and guidelines of major fieldwork studies, such as Weber & Beaud (2010), Lofland et al. (2006) and Burgess (1984), in order to ensure a high scientific character of this observation.

Regarding the demographic characteristics of the audience present, the room was filled with around twenty rows of eight seats each, all of which were occupied, making it possible to estimate the presence of around 160 people in the room. A majority of men was also observed, though I could note the presence of many women and, in particular, could hear Brazilian Portuguese being spoken by multiple women. During the interventions of both speakers, the public was extremely vocal, though from the vocal reactions I heard and took note of, all of the out-loud comments came from men. I could however recognize women's laughter and nods in appreciation at several points of the lecture.

The interventions themselves, specifically the long intervention by Brazilian MP Campagnolo, despite being mainly focused on the perceived failures of the feminist movement, touched on a variety of subjects: from the opposition to abortion, to the diminishing of sexual violence, the rejection of transgender rights, and, most notably, the emphasizing of the importance of preserving traditional gender roles and of erasing the word "gender" from our vocabulary, instead replacing it with "sex". Campagnolo goes even further on this question of the word gender, asking the public to "act crazy when people talk to you about gender" and "pretend you don't understand", claiming that when using "their [feminists] language, we lose a battle."

The statements that caused most verbal reactions came mostly from MP Campagnolo, who often asked questions to the public, such as "In Brazil now, they think everything is rape! Is it the same here?", getting loud reactions, in nods and responses from men in the front rows yelling "Yes!" and "They're trying to!". She also repeatedly made jokes at the expense of female stereotypes, where the punchline would be that women victimize themselves too much, that women never stop talking, or that their place is in the kitchen, which would get laughs from the public. In fact, the public's reactions throughout the interventions allowed me to denote the existence of a sentiment of rebelliousness, of fighting against the politically

correct, which is a classic characteristic of the European radical right movements (Mudde, 2007).

A significant finding from the non-participant observation was the speakers' effort in devaluing the concept of gender equality as a whole, instead focusing on gender complementarity and not seeing women as victims of anything. On this matter, Campagnolo refuses the idea of a gender wage gap, claiming that it is women's natural predisposition to stay at home and not be as ambitious as men: "We [women] only do not make the same money as men because we don't want to put our job as our priority, we don't want to lose our quality of life", stating that this makes us smarter and more aware of our biological needs, such as having children, which is described as the greatest thing a woman could ever do in her life ("she [woman] could do anything else with her life, but nothing would be as great as having children"), statements which also ensured nods of appreciation from members of the audience.

Feminism is therefore taken as something vile and violent which perverts society in its entirety and subverts the traditional values, even being referred by Campagnolo as a hydra, a mythological nine-headed serpent which grows two heads every time one of the heads is cut off. It is explained to the public that feminism is already intrinsic to our political and academic institutions and that as much as we try to cut off one of the heads of the feminist hydra, it emerges again, which is why she believes we must fight against it with all our strength. When addressing this fight against feminism, Campagnolo mentions how in Brazil, unlike Portugal, the anti-feminist movement is growing, providing the following example: "This year in São Paulo, five thousand women got together to talk about how to take better care of the house, how to not abandon motherhood and how to be a better woman." I believe these anti-feminist priorities mentioned by the Brazilian MP quite thoroughly sum up the ideas behind this anti-feminist movement and the aforementioned references made about the need to return to the origins and supporting traditional gender roles.

In conclusion, though the views of the speakers and the public on gender and feminism are their own and cannot be directly taken as *Chega's*, it is worth noting that some of the most recognizable *Chega* leaders and MPs were present at the event, having reserved seats in the front row of the room and coming to the stage at the end of the event to take pictures and sing the Portuguese national anthem. It is therefore not wise to detach the views presented at this event from those of the party, deeming it evident that *Chega* holds anti-feminist stances.

## 7. Discussion: Chega's gender perspectives in light of the academic literature

This dissertation set out to explore the intricacies of the Portuguese radical right through the lens of gender, particularly focusing on their women members and supporters' perspectives. Firstly, it is therefore important to confront the findings presented in the previous chapter with the literature on this subject, following the structure of the analysis.

This chapter thus starts by addressing the dimension of Gender Equality. What can be taken from this dissertation on this matter is that *Chega* makes extremely ambiguous references as to their views on gender equality, defending the abolition of the current legal systems pertaining to gender equality and its substitution, but never expanding on their claims of the need for a true gender equality law. Both the official documents, the interventions at the *Chega* youth event and the interviewed women demonstrate a gender essentialist perspective, which equates the term gender to sex and holds the associated belief that society needs men and women to complement themselves instead of search for equality, as conceptualized by Blee (2020). Indeed, and as referred to in the literature review, PRR parties' connection to gender equality is not so straightforward. On the one hand, research on this matter converges on the idea that PRR parties hold traditional beliefs regarding gender roles and present stances of gender essentialism, equating gender to sex and invalidating important premises to gender equality as a whole (Akkerman, 2015; Blee, 2020; Darakchi, 2019; Félix, 2015; Mayer et al., 2014). Contrastingly, recent studies have addressed how European PRR parties have begun to incorporate gender equal policies and ideals into its agenda, particularly in times of electoral struggle, thus meaning that an opposition to gender equality was not currently a common trait of all PRR parties (Meguid et al., 2022; Spierings & Zaslove, 2015). Regarding *Chega* in specific, multiple suggested that conservative gender roles and hypermasculinity is characteristic of the party (Marchi, 2020; Martins & Cabrera, 2023; Heyne & Manucci, 2021; Santos & Roque, 2021). In fact, this research suggests that this gender conservatism is largely found within *Chega*, and that overall *Chega* seems to be currently included in the list of European PRR parties who disregard references to gender equality and present more conservative views on the matter, rather than be a party who employs gender-equal perspectives in strategic times.

Regarding Work-Family Balance, this topic is very under researched in association with PRR parties' gender perspectives. The issues proved, however, to be integral to how these parties view gender: Meguid et al. (2022), in their research of 24 PRR parties in 21 different countries, concluded that Work-Family Balance was the most mentioned topic in these parties' manifestos, as compared to issues such as gender equality and violence against women. Indeed, the same is concluded on this dissertation, seeing as of a total of 46

references found for the eight dimensions in analysis on *Chega's* official documents, the dimension contains 12 references, the highest number amongst the analyzed subjects – meaning that 26.6% of all references to gender considered on this study pertain to Work-Family Balance (as can be seen in Table 3 presented above). *Chega* focuses on the role of the natural family, as well as on the amplification of childcare and family benefits, though the interviewed women members and supporters demonstrated more heterogeneous views on the matter.

Turning to the question of reproductive rights, most references on this topic are made regarding abortion. On this matter, it was reported that *Chega* refuses the current abortion law and opposes its practice within the National Health Service, except in cases of danger to the mother's life, rape, or malformation of the fetus. It must be stated, however, that this is only what can be taken from the analysis of the *Chega* official documents and the *Chega* youth event – evidently, statements, parliamentary interventions and proposed laws could provide additional perspectives on this particular matter. The interviews also provide more nuance on this subject, seeing as there is a clear distinction witnessed between 5 anti-abortion women, who considered it murder in all circumstances and 4 women who were in favor of abortion in certain conditions. These findings somewhat challenge previous research which portray multiple PRR parties' stances as extremely anti-abortion, considering it a heinous crime regardless of the conditions surrounding it, which has further resulted in its absolute criminalization by PRR governments (Akkerman, 2015; Juhász & Pető, 2021; Koralewska & Zielińska, 2022). Similarly, previous studies have also described *Chega* as solidly standing against abortion (Marchi, 2020; Heyne & Manucci, 2021). While that is confirmed by this analysis, this view is not at all consensually shared by the sampling of the women members and supporters of *Chega*.

On the matter of gender-based violence, it is concluded that in the official documents, *Chega* demonstrates firm support for stricter sentences for perpetrators of domestic and sexual violence, including chemical castration and life in prison. This stance was highly corroborated by the interviewees, as expanded in the previous chapter, who considered this matter a priority subject of *Chega*. These findings are quite in accordance with the literature, which suggests that PRR parties have taken the question of violence against women in particular to justify changes in their legal system and support of stronger sentences for perpetrators, and simultaneously demonstrate support to women in strategic manners (Alonso & Espinosa-Fajardo, 2021; Reinhardt et al., 2023). Furthermore, multiple mentions of issues related to gender-based violence are made directly in reference to immigration – as argued by Reinhardt et al. (2023) regarding the Italian Lega's usage of this topic in relation to femonationalist views.

Femonationalism, one of the key concepts identified in the literature review and a strategy extensively employed by European PRR parties refers to these parties' defense of women's rights from an outside threat, usually towards Muslim immigrants (Farris, 2012; Colella, 2021; Santos & Roque, 2021). This is frequently a discursive strategy most used in parties' parliamentary interventions, such as those analyzed by Kantola and Lombardo (2021) on the grounds of the EP. Contrastingly, Meguid et al. (2022) found this topic to have very low presence on party manifestos. Though on this study, four stances were found on *Chega's* official documents which were categorized as adhering to the femonationalist perspective, the large majority of women members and supporters of *Chega* who were interviewed displayed indubitable femonationalist discourse, validating the thesis that this subject is most observed in more informal, discursive settings. These findings also support Santos and Roque (2021)' analysis of *Chega* in regards to femonationalism, where clear femonationalist stances were found.

Regarding the Sexual and Gender Minorities dimension, the literature points to overall conservative views on the rights of the LGBTQ+ community, in questions such as gay marriage and adoption and, most notably, transgender rights (Cabezas, 2022; Doer, 2021; Yermakova, 2021; Petterson, 2017). This goes in hand with the above-mentioned concept of gender essentialism adopted by PRR parties, a perspective which undermine non-binary and transgender rights (Blee, 2020). However, as occurred with gender equality, recent studies are demonstrating some parties have incorporated pro-LBGTQ+ stances, in particular surrounding support to gay and lesbian rights, connected to nationalist and nativist policies – in this case, using the same logic as femonationalism, except referring to protecting gay and lesbian people's rights as well (Spierings & Zaslove 2015). On this dissertation, evidence for the latter has not been found, and indeed, conservative views regarding the LGBTQ+ community are a pattern in the documents, event and interviews. Though all the interviewed women recognized sexuality and gender minorities should have their rights guaranteed under the law and *Chega* claimed to respect "other different models of shared life" (*Chega* Political Program, 2021), it is worth noting that *Chega* explicitly claims its firm defense of the natural family which includes the marriage between a man and a woman, and a vehement opposition to sex changes being included in the Portuguese National Health Service. Thus, *Chega* does not stray from the conservative patterns of other PRR parties in regards to this subject, most markedly referring to this topic in connection with the following dimension of gender ideology.

Indeed, anti-gender movements have grown exponentially in Europe, largely supported by PRR parties who claim to be the opposers to this gender ideology which is entering schools and homes and subverting family values (Kováts, 2018; Paternotte & Kuhar, 2018;



Corredor, 2019; Kováts & Põim, 2015). This study observes the existence of a definite stance by *Chega* of anti-gender ideology, described by the party as “insufferable” (Manifesto for Europe, 2019) and a “dictatorship” (Manifesto, 2021). In fact, this is one of the issues in which the three analyzed sources presented identical perspectives regarding considering it a societal problem and its strong opposition to this agenda entering the schools and families. These results matched those observed in the few studies which focus on *Chega* and gender, and which argued that anti-gender ideology is a prominent feature of the party (Caldeira & Machado, 2023; Santos & Roque, 2021; Heyne & Manucci, 2021; Marchi, 2020).

Lastly, this research explored how feminism is perceived within *Chega* and its women members and supporters. As previously mentioned, there are no references to feminism in *Chega*’s documents, though it is still possible to draw conclusions based on the views expressed at the event and at the interviews. Firstly, it is worth noting that the organization of an explicitly anti-feminist event by the national *Chega* youth section hints to an anti-feminist stance from the party, which matches *Chega*’s more conservative stance on the other dimensions studied. This is validated by the data from the interviews, seeing as all of the interviewed women presented anti-feminist beliefs. The findings of this research therefore corroborate previous studies on the connection between PRR parties and feminism beliefs, which are held by a multitude of parties (Darakchi, 2019; Bernardez-Rodal et al., 2022; Cabezas, 2022; Meret, 2015). As stated by Mudde (2007), some parties do acknowledge the historical importance of the movement, while others do not and oppose feminism in its entirety: though the exact view of *Chega* on this matter was not able to be determined, these ideas describes the perspectives of the interviewees, who divided themselves among those who believed feminism has had its importance, and those who outright rejected it. These findings also validate points made on previous research on *Chega* on this topic, which have claimed that anti-feminism in *Chega* is a strategy to break the societal belief that feminism equals women’s causes, and to guarantee *Chega* defends women outside of feminism (Martins & Cabrera, 2022) – this idea was entirely confirmed by the interviewees and the intervention at the event. It is also interesting to denote that Petterson (2017) concluded that women in PRR party projected opposing ideas on feminism, some of them presenting feminist discourse associated with femonationalism and protection of women’s rights, whilst simultaneously arguing gender equality has gone too far. Similarly, Meret and Siim (2015) concluded women leaders of PRR parties use feminist arguments to explain their own marginalization regarding their gender and political ideology, while often opposing feminist arguments in other aspects. These contradictions and dichotomies were undoubtedly witnessed in the interviews, as the interviewees’ anti-feminism did not deter them from

speaking of how they were also marginalized as right-wing women and from presenting femonationalist arguments.

In sum, *Chega's* perspectives towards gender presented by the documents, the event and the interviews are generally in accordance with the literature's findings regarding most European PRR parties, though the aforementioned observed trend of parties recently strategically presenting less conservative and more gender-equal positions was not detected. The following chapter, in addition to providing some further conclusions on this research, will address this contrast between the Portuguese case and other European PRR parties.

## 8. Conclusions: How Do Women's Gender Perspectives Align with Chega's?

The discussion of the research results sets the stage for a series of reflections and conclusions, encompassing the alignment of perspectives between Chega and its women members and supporters on gender-related issues, as well as Chega's level of party identification concerning these matters. (Dalton, 2016). As introduced earlier, PRR parties encompass a wide constituency and the PRR party family has been classified as relatively more heterogeneous than its counterparts (Röth et al., 2018; Ennser, 2012). It was therefore expected that some heterogeneity would be found within the party *Chega* regarding gender-based subjects and that the more informal, spontaneous and private environments such as interviews would display these heterogeneous perspectives more profoundly than the semi-public event and the official documents. Effectively, the findings corroborate these expectations: as described on the analysis, some heterogeneity is found amongst the perspectives of women within Chega, as well as when comparing their perspectives with those of the party. In fact, even on the subjects where women most aligned with the party, those beliefs were expressed on the interviews in a more spontaneous and radical style.

Furthermore, considering these findings, it is possible to answer the guiding question of this dissertation: To what extent do the gender perspectives of women members and supporters of *Chega* align with the official views of the party? As stated on the introduction to this research, not all members and supporters of a political party will display alignment with the party in all its policies and stances, and within PRR parties that alignment has been theorized to be diminished except on matters of immigration (McDonnell & Werner, 2018; Rovny & Polk, 2020). Indeed, as explored above, some incongruence was registered in a few subjects, namely Reproductive Rights, specifically the matter of abortion, and the question of Work-Family Balance. Yet, for the most part, it is undoubtable that women members and supporters of *Chega* generally express an alignment with the party regarding gender perspectives, in particular regarding Gender-Based Violence, Gender Ideology and Sexuality and Gender Minorities. While it had been expected, and was further verified, that some heterogeneity would be found, this lack of alignment in certain subjects does not exclude a definite conclusion: overall, the interviewed women members and supporters of *Chega* present traditional and conservative views on gender-based subjects, generally endorsing the party's stances on the same issues.

These findings prompt deeper contemplation, giving rise to three additional reflections: firstly, as presented in the literature review, this dissertation addresses the puzzle of women's involvement with PRR parties, as these parties often hold gender-based positions that are not congruent with what are considered women's general interests (Meguid et al., 2022).

Additionally, far-right movements and parties are generally associated with masculinism, as well as violence, which is an ideal more rejected by women than men (Mudde, 2019). The women interviewed for this dissertation, however, extensively expressed that they do not view their political ideologies to be incongruent with their perception of their own gender and rights. This dissertation therefore also aimed to unravel this puzzle and understand what reasonings were held by these women to support views that could arguably go against their general interests. Overall, the interviewed women's highly traditional and anti-feminist stances help justify this, seeing as all interviewees claimed the feminist movement never represented them or all women, only representing women who agree with their movement. In fact, their opposition to such a large global movement associated with ensuring women's rights and gender equality worldwide can demonstrate how these women have felt isolated in their conservative perspectives. What aggravates this is the fact that most women claimed they often feel discriminated by other women due to their political ideologies: if they believe feminists are being hypocritical by not defending them due to their ideologies, it could make sense that they also develop an even stronger opposition to the ideals feminists stand for.

Furthermore, after discussing these findings and comparing them to the literature on other PRR parties, it is worth reflecting on why this research concluded the existence of conservative gender-based perspectives held by *Chega*, and not the strategically feminist stances held by some PRR parties, as observed in the literature review. As expanded by Mudde (2019), some PRR parties openly promote women's rights, without incorporating the traditional beliefs on motherhood and gender roles. Various parties of this ideology have also adapted their stances to become gradually more gender-equal in times of electoral struggle (Meguid et al., 2022; Spierings & Zaslove, 2015). Why is it then that *Chega* has not adopted these strategic positions? The recency of the party's emergence could partially influence this, as it could be a possibility that *Chega* has not yet fully consolidated their stances on gender-based subjects and could still, if undergoing an electoral period where attracting female voters would be particularly significant, shift their gender-based stances. This is, however, merely a reflection, as future research would be necessary to compare *Chega*'s gendered views to other PRR parties, in order to draw further conclusions on this matter.

The third reflection lies in the effects of the growth of these anti-gender views in society. As expressed above, both *Chega* and its women members and supporters presents stances which are widely considered as discriminatory, namely against the LGBTQ+ community and in particular transgender people, Muslim immigrants, and women who fall outside of their conservative gender roles. This was particularly noticeable on the interviews, where multiple women expressed ideals which were undoubtedly discriminatory, such as claiming that any men who wants to enter Portugal coming from an Arab country should be denied entrance,

that they only respect LGBTQ+ people when they are quiet and don't humiliate themselves in parades, or that women are fools for looking for worth outside of their own house, where they have the important role of being a mother. It is important to reflect on how these types of beliefs influence the world around us. In fact, research has demonstrated a correlation between the legitimization of discriminatory beliefs in the public sphere, often associated with the growth of PRR parties, and the increase of hate speech and hate crimes (Bilewicz et. al, 2017; Perry et al., 2020; Piatkowska & Lantz, 2021). These findings justify the pertinence of deeply understanding PRR parties and their supporters' beliefs: as PRR ideologies continue to gain traction, comprehending the nature of these beliefs and their origins becomes crucial in addressing their broader societal implications, which particularly affect minority groups.

This dissertation therefore contributes to the developing field of gender studies of the Populist Radical Right, providing more information regarding the case of Portugal's PRR party *Chega*. In contrast to other European countries, literature on the role played by gender in Portuguese PRR parties is still scarce. In particular, no previous study focused on this subject beyond the view of the party and its leaders and members' official positions. This research's key contribution therefore lies in addressing this topic through interviews, where it was possible to truly reflect on who and where are the women within *Chega* and what their perspectives are on gender-based subjects. Moreover, this dissertation also was able to further clarify *Chega*'s positions regarding gender-based subjects, particularly in dimensions which had not been as considered in the literature, such as Work-Family Balance, Gender-based Violence and Sexuality and Gender Minorities. In analyzing this, it was also possible to understand, from the examined gender-based dimensions, which were more salient in the documents (Work-Family Balance, followed by Gender-Based Violence and Gender Ideology) and less salient (Feminism, followed by Femonationalism), providing further insights on *Chega*'s priority subjects regarding gender. Moreover, the findings shed new light on how these subjects are viewed from the sampling of women members and supporters of *Chega*, leading to the unforeseen finding of the contrasting perspectives on reproductive rights held by the interviewees, which constitute a relevant contribution to the understanding of party congruence on matters of abortion. In addition, though previous studies had developed *Chega*'s femonationalist perspectives, namely Santos and Roque (2021), analyzing the party's documents and social media posts, this research further validates the prevalence of femonationalist discourse within and inside of *Chega*, bringing a new finding on the fact that women members and supporters of this party demonstrate even more distinct femonationalist stances than the official party views.

Despite some valuable insights, and due to the paucity of previous studies on these matters, this study had an exploratory nature, which leaves many open doors for future

research. Firstly, it is necessary to state the limitations of this study, a clear one being found on the sampling of the interviewed women. Due to the difficulty in establishing contact with potential respondents, the contact through social media inevitably resulted in a lowered average age of the interviewees (33 years old), which has potentially affected the findings of this study. Future research would be beneficial to complement these findings, for instance, through a more quantitative approach which could reach a higher sample size of members and supporters of the party, as to more effectively measure party identification. Moreover, the analysis of the *Chega* official documents does not allow for a holistic perspective on the party's stance on the subjects. Ideally, this research would be complemented by a study on *Chega*'s proposed laws and parliamentary interventions, seeing as they would help in more effectively measuring the party's prioritization of each gender-based subject – this became clear on the interviews, as women would mention specific measures that they considered to be a priority for *Chega* which were not mentioned in the documents whatsoever.

Furthermore, these findings spark one last reflection which could perhaps inspire future research: though it was concluded that generally the perspectives of women members and supporters of *Chega* align with those of the party, how does this lack of alignment in certain subjects, for instance on the matter of reproductive rights, affect the party? Although the interviewed women clarified that the issues in which they disagreed with *Chega*'s official perspectives did not deter them from endorsing the party, further research could explore whether this incongruence is felt on a wider sample of *Chega* members and supporters, whether there is a gap in how this subject is viewed by women versus men who are involved in the party, and if this perceived lack of alignment holds any effective impact. In doing so, it would be possible to understand whether voices of women members of the party are being considered when detailing the party's ideologies and proposed policies.

In conclusion, as cited earlier in this dissertation, women members of PRR parties “interact within the ideological ecosystem, rather than passively receive content.” (Campion, 2020, p.1). It has become clear throughout this study that, unlike commonly thought, women are present in *Chega*, just as they are present in every other European PRR party. Though their voices have been less heard on mass media, there is no denying that these women are not merely names on a party list. They preside youth sections, they participate in women's sections, they are advisors and coordinators of regional and national branches of *Chega* and above all, they support the party's conservative views on gender roles, they share their party's concerns on immigration and its effect on women and children's rights, they speak out against gender ideology and feminism, and they are determined to stand up for the ideals their party stands for.

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# Annex

## Annex A - Interview Script

Table A1: Interview Script

<b>Introductory questions</b>	Nationality / Age / City / Educational background / Job/occupation
	What is your relationship with the party <i>Chega</i> ?
	How do you describe your political views?
	What does it mean to you to be a woman?
	How do you define gender?
<b>Gender Equality</b>	What does gender equality mean to you?
	Does gender equality exist in Portugal?
<b>Gender-based Violence</b>	Does gender-based violence exist in Portugal? - In which situations? - Is female genital mutilation a problem in Portugal?
	What policies would you like to see implemented relating to gender-based violence (domestic violence/sexual violence/physical violence etc.)?
<b>Work-Life Balance</b>	How do you characterize work-family balance in Portugal?
	Do you believe men and women currently hold different roles inside the family?
	- Is there unequal distribution of labor at home?
<b>Reproductive Rights</b>	Should there be restrictions to abortion in Portugal? - If so, which restrictions?
	What policy would you like to see implemented regarding women's sexual and reproductive rights?
<b>Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity</b>	What are views about the rights of the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, plus) community in Portugal?
	Is there discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity? - If so, should the State have a role in stopping this discrimination?
<b>Femonationalism</b>	What is your view on Portugal's current immigration scene? - What risks and benefits do you find related to immigration?
	Do you believe more restrictions to immigration would have an effect on the defense of women's rights and gender equality?
	Regarding respect for gender equality, how do you compare the situation in Portugal to other countries?
<b>Gender Ideology</b>	What does gender ideology mean to you?
	Is gender ideology a problem in Portugal?
	Are there any policies you would like to see proposed to address gender ideology?
	How do you define feminism?

<b>Feminism</b>	What are your views on the current feminist movements?
<b><i>Chega</i>-related questions</b>	How would you describe <i>Chega</i> 's views on the previously discussed subjects (gender equality, gender-based violence, work-life balance, sexual orientation and gender identity, immigration, gender ideology and feminism)?
	What would be a policy related to gender you would like to see presented by <i>Chega</i> ?
	Do you identify with <i>Chega</i> 's views regarding gender, in all of the dimensions we just discussed?
<b>Debriefing</b>	Is there anything else I haven't asked about that you would like to talk about? Do you have any additional questions?

## Annex B - Informed Consent & Debriefing

O presente estudo surge no âmbito de um projeto de investigação a decorrer no **Iscte – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa**.

A sua participação no estudo, que será muito valorizada pois irá contribuir para o avanço do conhecimento neste domínio da ciência, consiste em responder a uma série de perguntas relacionadas com as suas visões sobre vários assuntos relacionados com género e com a sua ideologia política. Não existem riscos significativos expectáveis associados à participação no estudo.

O estudo tem por objetivo explorar a forma como os temas relacionados com o género são abordados pelo partido *Chega*, bem como as perspetivas das mulheres apoiantes e membros dos órgãos nacionais e distritais dos partidos em relação aos mesmos temas.

A entrevista terá a duração prevista de 45 minutos.

O Iscte é o responsável pelo tratamento dos seus dados pessoais, recolhidos e tratados exclusivamente para as finalidades do estudo, tendo como base legal o seu consentimento o artigo 6º, número 1, alínea a) e o artigo 9º, número 2, alínea a), do Regulamento Geral de Proteção de Dados.

O estudo é realizado por Sofia Oliveira, [spgoa1@iscte-iul.pt](mailto:spgoa1@iscte-iul.pt), que poderá contactar caso pretenda esclarecer uma dúvida, partilhar algum comentário ou exercer os seus direitos relativos ao tratamento dos seus dados pessoais. Poderá utilizar o contacto indicado para solicitar o acesso, a retificação, o apagamento ou a limitação do tratamento dos seus dados pessoais.

A participação neste estudo é **confidencial**. Os seus dados pessoais serão sempre tratados por pessoal autorizado vinculado ao dever de sigilo e confidencialidade. O Iscte garante a utilização das técnicas, medidas organizativas e de segurança adequadas para proteger as informações pessoais. É exigido a todos os investigadores que mantenham os dados pessoais confidenciais.

Além de confidencial, a participação no estudo é estritamente **voluntária**: pode escolher livremente participar ou não participar. Se tiver escolhido participar, pode interromper a participação e retirar o consentimento para o tratamento dos seus dados pessoais em qualquer momento, sem ter de prestar qualquer justificação. A retirada de consentimento não afeta a legalidade dos tratamentos anteriormente efetuados com base no consentimento prestado.

Os seus dados pessoais serão conservados por dois meses após a data da entrevista, após o qual serão anonimizados, garantindo-se o seu anonimato nos resultados do estudo, apenas divulgados para efeitos estatísticos, de ensino, comunicação em encontros ou publicações científicas.

O Iscte não divulga ou partilha com terceiros a informação relativa aos seus dados pessoais.

O Iscte tem um Encarregado de Proteção de Dados, contactável através do email [dpo@iscte-iul.pt](mailto:dpo@iscte-iul.pt). Caso considere necessário tem ainda o direito de apresentar reclamação à autoridade de controlo competente – Comissão Nacional de Proteção de Dados.

**Declaro** ter compreendido os objetivos de quanto me foi proposto e explicado pelo/a investigador/a, ter-me sido dada oportunidade de fazer todas as perguntas sobre o presente estudo e para todas elas ter obtido resposta esclarecedora. **Aceito** participar no estudo e consinto que os meus dados pessoais sejam utilizados de acordo com a informações que me foram disponibilizadas.

Sim ☐ Não ☐

\_\_\_\_\_ (local), \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (data)

Nome: \_\_\_\_\_ Assinatura: \_\_\_\_\_

### Debriefing:

Muito obrigado por ter participado neste estudo. Conforme adiantado no início da sua participação, o estudo incide sobre o papel do género nos partidos de direita conservadora, mais especificamente com o estudo de caso sobre o partido *Chega*, e pretende compreender as perspetivas do partido *Chega* e das suas apoiantes e membros dos órgãos do partido em relação a ideais de género.

No âmbito da sua participação, reafirma-se que a sua participação é voluntária, confidencial e os seus dados pessoais serão utilizados unicamente para o contexto deste estudo e para a sua divulgação científica.

Reforçamos os dados de contacto que pode utilizar caso deseje colocar uma dúvida, partilhar algum comentário, ou assinalar a sua intenção de receber informação sobre os principais resultados e conclusões do estudo: Sofia Oliveira, [spgoa1@iscte-iul.pt](mailto:spgoa1@iscte-iul.pt)

Mais uma vez, obrigado pela sua participação.

## Annex C- Characteristics of the Interviews and Interviewees

Table C1: Characteristics of the Interviews and Interviewees

Inter-views	Relationship with <i>Chega</i>	Type of contact	Date of the interview	Total time of the interview	Age	Nationality	Region (EU NUTS II)	Educational Background
I1	Member of a youth section	Social Media	10 <sup>th</sup> of July 2023	33 minutes	27	Portuguese	North	Bachelor's degree
I2	Supporter	Social Media	11 <sup>th</sup> of July 2023	58 minutes	32	Brazilian	Center	Post-graduate degree
I3	Member of a <i>Chega</i> regional body	Social Media	19 <sup>th</sup> of July 2023	48 minutes	37	Portuguese	Algarve	Post-graduate degree
I4	Member (militante)	Referral (snowball method)	18 <sup>th</sup> of July 2023	58 minutes	44	Portuguese	North	Secondary education
I5	Supporter	Social Media	5 <sup>th</sup> of August 2023	19 minutes	31	Portuguese	Lisbon and Tejo Valley	Secondary education
I6	Member of a <i>Chega</i> national body	E-mail to <i>Chega</i> national bodies	20 <sup>th</sup> of July 2023	51 minutes	42	Portuguese	Lisbon and Tejo Valley	Master's degree
I7	Member of a <i>Chega</i> youth section	Social media	31 <sup>st</sup> of July 2023	1 hour 11 minutes	19	Portuguese	Algarve	Currently doing a bachelor's degree
I8	Member of a <i>Chega</i> regional body	Social media	1 <sup>st</sup> of August 2023	1 hour 13 minutes	43	Brazilian	Autonomous Region of Madeira	Bachelor's degree
I9	Member of a <i>Chega</i> youth section	Social media	25 <sup>th</sup> of July 2023	1 hour 18 minutes	19	Portuguese	Alentejo	Currently doing a bachelor's degree



## Annex D - Analysis Tables

Table D1: Analysis of the *Chega* Documents by dimension

Dimensions	<i>Chega</i> Documents	
	Analysis	Quotes
<b>Gender Equality</b>	<p><i>Chega</i> is against the Parity Law which establishes gender parity in the party lists for regional and national elections, considering it discrimination. Defense of merit instead of equality.</p> <p><i>Chega</i> claims that when governing, the Gender and Equality Law will be repealed and replaced by a true law of equality between men and women, though not specifying what that law will entail. Domestic protection should protect men and women equally.</p> <p><i>Chega</i> refers to the equality between men and women in opposition to the current gender wars.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Suppression of the Parity Law and any type of quota policies. We defend a fair society and not based on discrimination, we defend a society based on merit, where the best will not be harmed by the mediocre!” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> <li>• “Repeal of the Gender and Equality Law, as an alternative to the creation of a true Law of equality between men and women!” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> <li>• “Promotion of a domestic violence law that equally protects the elderly, men, women and children.” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal &amp; 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Promote true social equality between women and men, definitively closing the door to all ideological stigmas and dogmas that have been exacerbated in recent years and have greatly contributed to gender conflicts, valuing and respecting the uniqueness of each human being, acknowledging the natural differences between women and men, not as a source of problems, but as a rich universe of added value.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> </ul>
<b>Work-Family Balance</b>	<p><i>Chega</i> supports an extension of the maternity leave and additional child support measures, particularly to large families.</p> <p>The family is referred to as the backbone of society, and <i>Chega</i> proposes the creation of a Ministry of the Family, to relocate family to its central role in society and particularly within children’s education. Two mentions to large family support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “An articulate set of policies supporting maternity, similarly to other Member-States, such as the extension of the period of child support, such as birth licenses, ample fiscal benefits for couples with 2 or more children, etc.” – Manifesto For Europe</li> <li>• “Unequivocal defense of the Family as the original and fundamental cell of the entire Portuguese social structure.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> respects other different models of a shared life, however considers the natural family, based on the intimate relationship between a man and a woman, a psychosociological and socioeconomic reality previous to the State, historically stable and humanely irreplaceable. In it, life is transmitted, as well as a set of affective, emotional and behavioral balances, and knowledge, traditions and heritage which sustain dignity and prosperity of individuals and peoples.” – Political Program</li> <li>• “In Brussels we will fight for laws and specific support to Family, both nuclear family (mother, father and children) and extended family (grandparents, parents, grandchildren)” – Manifesto for Europe</li> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> puts family at the core of its conception of society.” – Political Program</li> <li>• “Due to the significant setback of the role of the family’s social relevance in the recent decades (...), <i>Chega</i> proposes the creation of the Ministry of the Family. It is the State’s indeclinable role to relocate family and its role in their children’s education in the central place it belongs at.” –</li> </ul>

		<p>Political Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Phased increase over 4 years of maternity leave until 3 years of age, which would be extended for another year in the case of children with disabilities” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> <li>• “Increase in tax benefits for large families, birth support measures. Establishment of bonuses proportional to the number of family members on all types of basic necessities, such as electricity or gas or access to cultural goods” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> <li>• “Reinforcement of support for large families, with the State strengthen and diversify tax benefits that include respective bonuses depending on the number of members of each family.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Pursue social policies to protect large families that protect the invoice of essential goods or services such as electricity, gas and access to any goods of a cultural nature.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Valorization of the role of motherhood and fatherhood in Portuguese families, ensuring a phased increase over 4 years in parental leave, with longer temporary deadlines, especially when children with disabilities and/or special needs are involved.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Ensuring the equity of family allowances, allowing for a significant increase in all situations where criteria of extreme need are met, duly proven after legally mandated inspection, namely in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th income brackets up to 16 years of age.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Promoting the expansion of the beneficiary base for prenatal family allowance, guaranteeing an increase of no less than 50% for the second child and 100% for the third and subsequent children.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> </ul>
<b>Reproductive Rights</b>	<p><i>Chega</i> refuses the idea of abortion-at-demand, where women can just ask for an abortion at a health center. <i>Chega</i> supports a reform of national adoption laws and more assistance and alternatives to abortion. Abortion (except in some circumstances) should be eliminated from the public health exemptions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> came to refuse. Refuse what is today taken as normal patterns (...) Refuse the abortion-at-demand (...) paid by the taxpayers.” – Manifesto</li> <li>• “Reform of national adoption laws. It is also essential that women with unexpected or unwanted pregnancies have information, assistance and genuine alternatives.” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> <li>• “Eliminate from public health exemptions all surgical interventions not related to health, such as sex changes and abortion (except cases of rape, malformation or others that endanger the woman's life)” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal &amp; 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Promoting the expansion of the beneficiary base for prenatal family allowance, guaranteeing an increase of no less than 50% for the second child and 100% for the third and subsequent children.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> </ul>
<b>Gender-based Violence</b>	<p>Though <i>Chega</i> mentions the extension of sentences for sexual crimes and harsher sentences for perpetrators in general, such as chemical castration, few gender distinctions are made. <i>Chega</i> mentions female genital mutilation, when claiming that the party forbids religious and political</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> proposes the abolishing of political and religious practices which offend the Portuguese juridical system and the European cultural roots (such as (...) female genital mutilation, forced marriages of minors” – Manifesto &amp; 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Promotion of a domestic violence law that equally protects the elderly, men, women and children.” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> <li>• “Promote legislation that effectively guarantees the fight against domestic violence, increasing</li> </ul>

	<p>practices which offend Portugal's juridical system and our European roots. In that same line in the Manifesto, <i>Chega</i> mentions forced marriages of minors – though no gendered references is made on this regard, it is statistically most occurrent to women. The same logic is applied to <i>Chega</i>'s references to rape and sexual crimes. Multiple references are made to domestic violence, which is also a gendered phenomenon.</p>	<p>the penal framework for this type of crime and ensuring the effective protection of the elderly, men, women and children.” – 100 Measures of Governing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “In the most severe scenarios, legislate to ensure that victims of domestic violence are granted the permission to change their identity and establish legal mechanisms to allow them to benefit from tax, social, and banking pardons, among others. This is especially relevant when, as a result of these crimes, they are forced to abandon their professional lives and fulfill their civil obligations. This includes providing periods of grace for bank loans and other financial matters, having witnessed their lives being completely shattered on multiple levels due to this reality.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Introduction of legislation, in the Penal Code, on chemical castration as a form of punishment for sexual offenders, for anyone guilty of crimes of a sexual nature committed against minors under 16 years of age. In the first conviction, chemical castration is an option for those applying the sentence, in the second it will be mandatory. It can be cumulative with other penalties such as prison and is applied when the aggressor is on probation.” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal &amp; 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Mandatory effective prison sentences for any crimes of rape, without the possibility of a suspended sentence” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal &amp; 100 Measures of Governing</li> </ul>
<b>Femo-nationalism</b>	<p>In its Political Program, <i>Chega</i> defends a stricter migratory system and while referring to the cult spaces and religious organizations which should be monitored and abolished, mentions those who incentivize crimes against women. In its Manifesto, <i>Chega</i> reiterates this idea, proposing the abolishing of practices which apply the Sharia law, practice female genital mutilation and have forced marriages of minors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> defends a migratory system that monitors and compulsively abolishes cult spaces which directly or indirectly promote behaviors incompatible to the western identity and culture (...) or any type of hate speech and incentive to religious or cultural practices which harm human dignity and crimes against women.” – Political Program</li> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> proposes the abolishing of political and religious practices which offend the Portuguese juridical system and the European cultural roots (such as ...) the application of the Sharia law, the female genital mutilation and forced marriages of minors” – Manifesto &amp; 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “Origin quotas will be established, giving priority to nationalities that share language and culture with Portugal. Combat political and religious practices that offend the Portuguese legal system (mainly, anti-Semitism, gender ideologies, the application of Sharia, excision, forced marriages of minors, inhibition of their attendance at Mandatory Minimum Education, Racism of any kind nature, among others). – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> </ul>
<b>Sexuality and Gender Minorities</b>	<p><i>Chega</i> makes continuous references in its documents to the idea of a natural family or mentions to family referring specifically to a man and woman. Despite that, in its Political Program, <i>Chega</i> claims to respect other different models of a shared life, but that the natural family between a man and woman is where life, emotional balances and traditions are transmitted. However, <i>Chega</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> came to refuse. (...) Refuse the SEX change surgeries paid by the taxpayers.” – Manifesto</li> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> respects other different models of a shared life, however considers the natural family, based on the intimal relationship between a man and a woman, a psychosociological and socioeconomic reality previous to the State, historically stable and humanely irreplaceable. In it, life is transmitted, as well as a set of affective, emotional and behavioral balances, and knowledge, traditions and heritage which sustain dignity and prosperity of individuals and peoples.” – Political Program</li> </ul>

	<p>does refer to the prohibition of the LGBTI agendas in the education system.</p> <p><i>Chega</i> also mentions its refusal of sex change surgeries in the national health service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Mandatory express authorization from the guardian for any activity with content of ethical, social, civic, moral, religious or sexual values, for students up to Secondary Education and the prohibition of propaganda of the LGBTI agenda in the education system with the aim the application of inclusion ideologies and gender ideology in the national education system.” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> <li>• “Eliminate from public health exemptions all surgical interventions not related to health, such as sex changes” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal &amp; 100 Measures of Governing</li> </ul>
<b>Gender Ideology</b>	<p>Though not extensively explaining their concept of gender ideology, <i>Chega</i> mentions this term in four different documents (Manifesto, Manifesto for Europe, 70 Measures and 100 Measures), making six references to it in total. Specifically, <i>Chega</i> mentions a complete refusal of gender ideology and the need to fight against in national and international terms, particularly at the school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> proposes the abolishing of political and religious practices which offend the Portuguese juridical system and the European cultural roots (such as (...) gender ideologies)” – Manifesto &amp; 100 Measures of Governing</li> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> came to refuse. Refuse a lot of what today is taken as a pattern of normality. (...) Refuse the dictatorship of Gender Ideology” – Manifesto</li> <li>• “We demand a Europe whose innumerable bureaucratic instances do not behave as transmitters of cultural Marxism, abusive referees of what is politically correct or incorrect and ways of propagating the insufferable Gender Ideology, to the many member-states. – Manifesto For Europe</li> <li>• “Mandatory express authorization from a student’s guardian for any activity with content of ethical, social, civic, moral, religious or sexual values, for students up to Secondary Education and the prohibition of propaganda of the LGBTI agenda in the education system with the aim the application of inclusion ideologies and gender ideology in the national education system.” – 70 Measures to Rebuild Portugal</li> <li>• “Prohibition of propaganda of the LGBTI agenda in the Portuguese teaching with the aim of applying the ideologies of inclusion and gender ideology in the national education system.” – 100 Measures of Governing</li> </ul>
<b>Feminism</b>	<p>There are no references to the Feminist movement in any of the <i>Chega</i> official documents.</p>	-

Table D2: Analysis of the *Chega* youth event by dimension

Dimensions	Rita Matia's Intervention at the "Feminism: Perversion and Subversion" Event	
	Analysis	Quotes
<b>Gender Equality</b>	Gender equals sex. <i>Chega</i> defends women and men equally, but sees a clear distinction between a man and a woman. Ned for a strive for complementarity instead of competition between men and women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "[<i>Chega</i>] defends the women and the men, without shying away of saying what is a woman and what is a man."</li> <li>• "We can affirm the obvious. A man is a man, a woman is a woman and there is nothing more beautiful than a complementarity between them, without introducing a competition that is unhealthy."</li> <li>• "They were discussing... sex, as to not say gender"</li> <li>• "We are going to resist, because the values we defend are the ancestral values, so we just need to grab this with strength, faith, determination and come back to our origins."</li> </ul>
<b>Work-Family Balance</b>	No mention specifically to women's difficulties of lack thereof in terms of work-family balance, but there are mentions to <i>Chega</i> 's commitment to defend the traditional family values. Also asked the public to be involved, create pro-family NGOs. (This topic was highly discussed by the other speaker)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The commitment of our party to defend the values of the Family"</li> <li>• "We need you to be militants, to create pro-life, pro-family, pro-women NGOs, occupy that space, it can't just be up to the Left to occupy it"</li> </ul>
<b>Reproductive Rights</b>	Only one mention to the idea that it is necessary to create pro-life NGOs to combat the Left's presence in society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "We need you to be militants, to create pro-life, pro-family, pro-women NGOs, occupy that space, it can't just be up to the Left to occupy it"</li> </ul>
<b>Gender-based Violence</b>	There were no mentions to gender-based violence.	-
<b>Femonationalism</b>	There were no mentions to immigration and no femonationalist stances.	-
<b>Sexuality and Gender Minorities</b>	Laws are being adopted about mixed gender bathrooms, students being able to identify with their preferred name and gender, attend activities divided by gender according to their preferred gender, which the speaker considers very unfair. In sports, they can even be evaluated according to their preferred gender, which is unfair because men are biologically stronger than women. Refers to transgender people as men who identify as women and women identify as men.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The Socialist Party could present a law that not just talks about mixed [gender] bathrooms as we heard, but also about the possibility of us at school identifying as however we want, and in the administrative processes have the name we determine, but it doesn't just end there. It determines that from now on, every individual, as the law says, can start to attend not just the spaces, but the activities which until then had been divided by biological sex, however they feel like it. This brings innumerable injustices, because I recently talked about the sport question, <i>Chega</i> presented big criticism to this law, and indeed from now, boys who identify as women can now start to compete with women, but this also brings a dimension of evaluation. If I say now... I'm a woman, this is a bad example, but if I say Rui over there identifies as woman (laughter) which is not the case! (...) But if he said he identifies as a woman, he would start to be evaluated as a woman. And that would be unfair to all the other</li> </ul>

		men who actually identify as men, because biologically they have very identical abilities, right?”
<b>Gender Ideology</b>	Though the term gender ideology is not referred specifically, there are multiple references to a hidden agenda that is entering our society and our schools and universities, and that is negative and divisive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “This agenda, as MP Ana explained, invades every step, and a lot of the time we think some narratives that come up (...) can be positive and have good intentions, but the truth is they don’t. It’s a very well-connected agenda.”</li> <li>• “If we want to combat [this agenda] we need <i>Chega</i> to have more MPs, we need 50 MPs soon, maybe even an absolute majority. We need to occupy the other spaces (...) combat them at universities”</li> </ul>
<b>Feminism</b>	Feminism are glasses put on the entire society, that distort our vision, make us biased, make us think and live as if we are victims of something, make us think we should hate men. We need to challenge all of that, all of the politically correct perspectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “An ideology is like glasses that we put on and interpret the reality through those glasses. And she [Brazilian MP] talked about how feminism can be those glasses which distort our own vision and make us biased.” (...) Those glasses are not just put on us, they’re put in all of society.”</li> <li>• “It’s possible to look at nature and observe what was made for us, for our pleasure and not have to live like we are victims of something. We were created to be free and Ana [Brazilian MP] is bringing us freedom.” “It’s important to state that women can admire men, without any complexes.”</li> </ul>

Table D3: Analysis of the Interviews on the dimension of Gender Equality

	Gender Equality	
	Analysis	Quotes
I1	Gender Equality is a man and woman being equal according to the law. It already exists because the law ensures it. Gender and sex are synonyms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“We need to see equality according to the law. Be it a man, woman or whatever they identify, according to the law we are already equal.”.</li> </ul>
I2	Women have a role in society that men cannot fulfill. Gender equals sex. Gender equality exists from her experience because she has never experienced discrimination for being a woman.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Women need to understand that she has the power to change the world from her own home. If she knew that she wouldn’t spend so much time trying to conquer rights that she already has and doesn’t know how to use”.</li> </ul>
I3	Sex is not the same as gender. Women have practically the same rights, though salary wise there is a discrepancy. The term gender is getting ridiculous because now everyone wants more rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Our rights are practically the same as men.”</li> <li>“We can vote, we can work, we can apply for upper positions at our jobs, we can do a masters, a PhD, we can do whatever we want to. What can’t we do that men can? Nothing.”</li> </ul>
I4	Believes in gender equality but finds it hard to achieve, because mean and aggressive people are everywhere.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“To be a woman is to be more fragile.”</li> <li>“Regardless of what we were born as, who we are, we are all equal, with the same rights and obligations”.</li> </ul>
I5	Gender equality is fake, men and women are different. We should not strive for equality. Gender equals sex.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“There are some privileges for women and others for men, we are not equal to men and I don’t want to be. I like being a woman, I don’t want to be equal to a man.” “Gender equality is a complete lie.”</li> </ul>
I6	Gender equals sex. There are still gender inequalities in the workplace and a gender gap, and that is what people should be focusing on. Strongly against gender quotas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Each gender has its role in society, and that role is well-defined”. “Each day we walk more towards equality of opportunity between men and women.”</li> </ul>
I7	Men and women should not be equal, their differences are what makes them unique. Gender and sex is the same.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I don’t believe that men and women should be equal. We can do different things and we need different things to get to different places.”</li> </ul>
I8	Gender equals sex. Men and women have different roles in society, they already have the same rights according to the law. Gender equality is a cultural thing, in some countries they don’t have it but here they do, because the law ensures it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“This woke culture is trying to destroy the word woman”</li> <li>“Gender equality is a social construct that came to confuse people’s minds. Men and women already have the same rights.”</li> </ul>
I9	Income inequality is a problem. Gender and sex is the same. There can never be true gender equality because the genders are different, but there should be equality of opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Gender equality can never exist, each gender has different competences.”</li> <li>“There is still gender discrimination. I have felt discriminated for being a woman at my university.”</li> </ul>

Table D4: Analysis of the Interviews on the dimension of Work-Family Balance

	Work-Family Balance	
	Analysis	Quotes
11	Work-Family balance regarding women is great, maternity leave and premature license are necessary and currently guaranteed in law. There is an unequal division of labor, but it makes sense because women are better at taking care of the house and children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Everything is right. I have nothing to say about women's rights in terms of [maternity] licenses.”</li> <li>• “The man is supposed to take care of the family in monetary aspects, and women should take care of the house, of the child, that's what happens in nature. That's what happens in my house.”</li> </ul>
12	Women currently have to work outside of their home, in regular jobs, as well as at home, taking care of the house and children. This is extremely detrimental and women should choose to let go of some financial and material comforts to ensure they can spend time at home with their children, doing motherly activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Women have undertaken a weight too heavy on them on the search for freedom, because they wanted to have their own money, their own things. It's all very individualistic. She ends up with a double working day, gets home tired, has to take care of the kids, the house and to worry about work.”</li> </ul>
13	Believes there needs to be a balance inside the home among a man and a woman, because women cannot do everything at home by themselves. The state has an active role guaranteeing subsidies, parental leaves, supports to pregnancy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I cannot subject myself to my husband to walk all over me, saying “I work and you stay home.” But why?? I also want to work and we have earned that right.”</li> <li>• “The State has an important role guaranteeing subsidies (...), I had the family allowance which helped me in financial terms.”</li> </ul>
14	The wage gap is a deep problem in society. In divorce cases, work-family balance is more complicated, women usually get custody and have more responsibilities and financial costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Housework is still a women's job nowadays (...) we haven't reached a balance yet.”</li> </ul>
15	There is no work-family balance in Portugal. There should be more time of maternity leave and more support to parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “In Portugal, [work-family balance] does not exist (...) Maternity and work in Portugal cannot be balanced, I see children and parents getting home late, there is no time for anything.”</li> </ul>
16	There are no effective policies to promote work-family balance in Portugal. Parents cannot spend time with their children and the government should follow Nordic countries' policies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There are no effective public policies that allow women to balance their family and professional lives. We fought so much for gender equality but there are no policies (...) to incentivize maternity, (...) to promote life quality.”</li> </ul>
17	It is hard for women to balance work and family. Women are at a biological disadvantage for needing to have children younger, and we must fight to guarantee mothers are not held behind at work, have worse conditions just for being mothers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Nowadays it feels like you're either a mother or you have a career. (...) Our body's goal is to be a mother (...), we need to fight to guarantee that women that want to be mothers can be mothers (...) so that she doesn't have to stay behind because she had a child.”</li> </ul>
18	It's very hard to balance work and family as a woman. Double working day is a reality and there needs to be policies to support women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “My job is triple. I have my job, I'm a mom and a housewife, and I'm a member of <i>Chega</i>.”</li> <li>• “Women always need a support system, and even with that support it is difficult.”</li> <li>• “Women do face a double working day and we need policies and support to manage it.”</li> </ul>



19	Policies are very important, like the paid license for gestational loss. Working schedules are the main issue. There are problems with housework labor division, but that mentality is changing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “In other countries in Europe, the working day ends at 3 and parents can spend time with their children.”</li> </ul>
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Table D5: Analysis of the Interviews on the dimension of Reproductive Rights

	Reproductive Rights	
	Analysis	Quotes
I1	Completely against abortion. When asked, did not give any justification or explanation on why. Contraceptive methods are already available, but some women do not have access to the national health service, so that should be improved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I am completely against abortion.”</li> <li>“Women do not always have access to contraceptive methods, because they do not have access to the National Health Service. That is a big problem.”</li> </ul>
I2	Completely against abortion. Has personally considered abortion as a teen mother and is thankful she did not do it. You can't accidentally become pregnant, you know the risks. Abortion is murder and women will carry that pain with them for the rest of their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“At the time [I got pregnant] it was impossible for me to have a child, I did not have psychological, financial conditions at all. But it was the best thing that happened to me. I'm glad I did not have access to abortion, if I did I would have done it.”</li> <li>“Pregnancy is not Covid, you don't accidentally catch it.”</li> </ul>
I3	The current law is fine as it is. There should be more support for couples who are trying to have a couple. In vitro fertilization isn't available in smaller cities in Portugal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I don't know how to justify it, but I think we have the right to choose to have a baby or not. (...) The current law is okay”</li> <li>“I wouldn't do it but I am in favor of it.”</li> <li>“What could be improved is reproduction support.”</li> </ul>
I4	The current law is fine as it is. Women sometimes are in very tough situations and it's not fair to make them give birth. Contraception methods aren't 100% effective. However, there should be a limit to how many abortions women can do in a year for free on the national health service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I think she [woman] should have the rights to choose, to say “I don't want it right now, I want in a few years. It's a woman's right.”</li> <li>“I think abortion should be limited, I don't know... one abortion by choice, like “I... something unexpected happened, and I want to have an abortion.” Alright, you should have the right, I don't know, to two abortions. More than that, the situation should be assessed. And ultimately, if I want to go through with it, I have to pay for it out of my own pocket.”</li> </ul>
I5	The current law is fine as it is. Believes women should be able to abort by her own choice, or because of malformation of the fetus, health problems etc. Cannot think of anything to be improved regarding reproductive rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I think I have the right to do an abortion.”</li> <li>“It's the woman that will have to bear the child for 9 months and the decision is only hers. No one else's.”</li> </ul>
I6	Completely against abortion. Abortion is not female empowerment and it should not be a contraceptive method. There are already effective policies on birth control and reproductive rights. Abortion is subverting our own values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Abortion is not a symbol of female empowerment. To me, it's the exact opposite. It's one the most violent situations that could ever happen.”</li> <li>“We currently have effective policies on birth control. Women can have access to the pill, men can have access to condoms in any medical center.”</li> </ul>
I7	Completely against abortion. Extremely against the pill and its biological and psychological effects on women, saying it changes women's hormones. Both subjects should be highly controlled.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Abortion is not a reproductive right, it's not a woman's right. (...) There are a lot of other methods, one of them being closing your legs.”</li> <li>“The pill is given to young women as something good. It's the opposite.”</li> </ul>

18	Completely against abortion. Contraception was a right gained by the feminists, so it doesn't make sense to allow abortions. There is a natality issue so abortion is even less understandable. Abortion should be completely illegal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "I am pro-life. From conception there is life, and you own your body but there's another body inside yours and you need to respect that life. You don't want it? Give them up for adoption." "</li> <li>• To me, it's murder."</li> </ul>
19	Believes she doesn't have to agree with <i>Chega</i> on every subject - Abortion should be legal due to the complex situations that can lead to a pregnancy. There should be a limit to abortions a woman can have in a year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "There are a lot of complicated situations, like children due to abortions, a person being obligated to complete the pregnancy is horrible, it's better to terminate the pregnancy."</li> <li>• "If a person does not use protection she's setting herself up."</li> </ul>

Table D6: Analysis of the Interviews on the dimension of Gender-based Violence

	Gender-based Violence	
	Analysis	Quotes
I1	<i>Chega</i> is the only party that defends women from violence. Stronger sentences for rapists and pedophiles. Did not know what to reply when asked about if gender-based violence existed. FGM should be more penalized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> is the only party that I see effectively defending women in those types of crimes, pedophilia, rapes, I do not see any action from other parties”</li> <li>• “Life in prison for every pedophile.”</li> </ul>
I2	There is a lot of abuse against Brazilian women in the workplace for being vulgar or easy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I have never lived through any of that, but I’ve heard my friends talk about abuse in the workplace for being Brazilian, thinking they’re easy, that they’re going to have it easy, indirect jokes like that. But that can happen anywhere in the world”.</li> </ul>
I3	Violence occurs to both sexes, the one against men is not visible due to the stigma, so there is more violence against women. There needs to be more resources to handle domestic violence. FGM needs stricter punishment. Stricter connection with associations that protect victims of domestic violence. Rape should be a public crime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “There is violence both from men to women and from women to men.”</li> <li>• “Female Genital Mutilation still exists in Portugal and the penalties should be enlarged not to just to who practices it, but to everyone who allows it to: the doctors, the families.”</li> <li>• “We also want rape to become a public crime.”</li> </ul>
I4	Suffered from domestic violence and it was that incident that made her join <i>Chega</i> , due to her disbelief in the Portuguese penal system, claiming it protects the aggressors. Women are easily targeted due to salary differences, being mothers, being physically weaker. More prevention of DV, larger penalties and sentences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Women are the weak target for domestic violence. Men usually have more strength, and women are mothers, they can get stuck in that situation.”</li> <li>• “A way to avoid people being aggressive is if they know that if they commit that crime, they will face a great torture. Most aggressors go to the judge and leave. They live a normal life, sometimes better than the victim, even if they’re convicted.”</li> </ul>
I5	Higher sentences for sexual and domestic violence, make it 25 years. Women report violence more, men suffer from it too.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “25 years of prison for whoever kills, assaults, rapes, be it a man, woman or child, does not matter!”</li> <li>• “There are more women victims but there are many men as well.”</li> </ul>
I6	Violence can happen against everyone. Men because of their biology have more propensity to be aggressors but not all men are. We should tackle violence gender-blindly. Stronger and more effective penalties – impeditive, women should never have to see their aggressor on their daily lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The idea that to be a man is a synonym of being an aggressor leaves me furious.”</li> <li>• “We should battle violence at its concept, and not create stigmas that men are aggressors and women are victims.”</li> </ul>
I7	Violence exists but is not systematic. There are many good men out there. The penal system needs to be harsher. Educating older women to the realities of domestic violence is necessary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I don’t think violence against women is systematic, but it exists in society and we should fight to eradicate it.”</li> <li>• “I wish the system was crueler to men who practice domestic violence (...) They should suffer in jail for much longer for what they did”.</li> </ul>

18	Both men and women commit violence. She is against suspended sentences for criminals. The key to solving violence is through education, and through solving unemployment and alcoholism, which are reasons why people commit domestic violence. The culture behind violence needs to be changed through education, and it is starting to change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If we don’t combat the cause, we will always have cases of domestic violence (...) What is behind this problem is unemployment and alcoholism.”</li> <li>• “This is a cultural problem. We need to try to change a bit this culture... It’s already changing.”</li> </ul>
19	She has gone through domestic violence, so is particularly concerned about this topic. Psychological violence should be taken more seriously.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “They should believe the victim’s word more.”. “It’s very complicated to prove those types of situations.”</li> </ul>

Table D7: Analysis of the Interviews on the dimension of Femonationalism

	Femonationalism	
	Analysis	Quotes
I1	More control is necessary regarding immigration. Claims there are a lot of rapes committed by immigrant men, such as the ones in Ubers, and that by keeping immigrants out, we are helping women.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Yes, more restrictions to immigrants would have an effect on women’s rights.”</li> <li>• “I have been witnessing a big increase of cases in Ubers, of women claiming they smelled a toxic scent, rapes (...) This needs to be controlled.”</li> <li>• “The true fight [of feminism] should be for the girls of minorities who should be studying, not getting married and having children.”</li> </ul>
I2	More control, Portugal receives too many immigrants. Did not see a correlation between immigration and women’s rights, did show any signs of femonationalist discourse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I see that Portugal receives a high number of immigrants and it did not prepare for them. Portugal is unprepared for this.”</li> </ul>
I3	More control is necessary. Muslim immigrants may be influencing our culture and our women’s rights, but she is not sure about this topic.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We have a lot of Muslims here in the city, a lot, a lot, a lot. (...) I know women there [in Muslim countries] don’t have rights”</li> <li>• “Maybe they carry that influence, I am not sure.”</li> </ul>
I4	More control is necessary, but immigration is not harming women currently. No signs of femonationalist discourse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I don’t see a direct connection [between immigration and women’s rights]. Maybe in those countries where women can’t have an active role, but from what I understand there are not that many immigrants from those countries.”</li> </ul>
I5	More control is necessary. Mentions sexual assault cases in Ubers. We should ban immigrants from countries where women have no rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Those Uber drivers, not all of them but some... a woman to them is like an old cloth that’s been used and should be used again.”</li> <li>• “Those countries where women have no rights, people from there should not even arrive here. They should arrive, we ask “What is your country?” They say that one, we say “I’m sorry, you won’t enter.”</li> </ul>
I6	More control is necessary. Immigrants from countries without women’s rights are conducting more crimes and the statistics are available for everyone. This should be a wake-up call to realize the importance of border control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Unfortunately, the numbers have gone high of violence against women committed by immigrants from countries where women have no rights, no role in society... I won’t specify the countries, it’s easy to understand what I’m talking about. (...) We need to understand these statistics so we can understand border control is important.”</li> </ul>
I7	More control is necessary. Need for protection of women, because at this rate of immigration, Muslim people will overpower Christian people and women in Portugal will lose their freedom. They have high rape rates in their countries, so they come here and do the same.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “They [Muslim immigrants] don’t look at women the same way we do. (...) We need to educate these people, not deny all of them here, but you need to educate these people, so they live in society.”</li> <li>• “In their countries, the rape rates are huge and gender inequality is very high.”</li> <li>• “At this rate, women are losing the freedom they have now.”</li> <li>• “If feminists want to fight for their rights, they can’t keep fighting for every person to be able to immigrate here.”</li> </ul>

18	More control is necessary, Portugal has an immigration problem. Muslim immigrants are used to subjugated women and mistreat women here. Mentions the sexual assault cases in Ubers by immigrants in Lisbon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Muslim people who enter Europe come from completely culturally different places. Women is much more subjugated.”</li> <li>• “Men who enter from countries which treat the women badly, where they need to wear a veil, they think they can rape, hit and all that when they get here.”</li> </ul>
19	More control is necessary. Immigrants from some countries are a danger to women and harass them because they're used to women not having any rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “They come from a country where women have no rights, and they walk around here like we have no rights here either, treating us badly every day and that can't happen.”</li> <li>• “We try to combat gender equality here and we have to fight against them.”</li> <li>• “I can see it in their eyes, they are used to women walking around covered and we don't and they love it.”</li> </ul>

Table D8: Analysis of the Interviews on the dimension of Sexuality and Gender Minorities

	Sexuality and Gender Minorities	
	Analysis	Quotes
I1	Everyone should have their rights guaranteed under the law. There is no discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation in Portugal. LGBTQ+ people are trying to impose their views on others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “No one’s sexuality or gender will define under the law their rights and duties, they’re completely regular people.”</li> <li>• “As a heterosexual, I don’t go around organizing a march or kissing my husband or making a fool of myself.”</li> <li>• ““A heterosexual person that has a normal family ends up being discriminated against now.”</li> </ul>
I2	People’s rights cannot overstep on her rights and on the rights of children. Particularly concerned about unisex bathrooms. Struggles of the LGBTQ+ community are exaggerated. Very worried about transgender ideals being forced on kids.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “ No one should be judged by their sexual option, but I don’t understand their big struggle... When I search for a job, no one asks me what my sexuality is.”</li> </ul>
I3	LGBT+ people have the same rights as everyone already, they shouldn’t be fighting for more rights. Transgender people will always be their biological sex. There is discrimination but there will always be discrimination in society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “If a person is gay, why would they have more rights than me?”.</li> <li>• “Even if I put a penis on, my chromosome will always be feminine.”</li> </ul>
I4	Does not know the LGBTQ+ community very well. They all should have their rights. Children of gay marriage should be paid attention to, to make sure they’re not being bullied. Discrimination is wrong and education is key.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Every person deserves the same rights.”</li> <li>• “There are so many genders now and every time we see more bizarre things. Not long ago, I saw a woman saying she was married to a doll.”</li> </ul>
I5	LGBTQ+ people shouldn’t go around parading their sexuality and acting like the victim, they should be quiet and polite. There is discrimination, but she discriminates as well, depending on the person. The government sometimes cares more about the LGBTQ+ community than health and schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “This community is exaggerating a little, saying everything is against them, that they’re the victims and all of that. If they want to be equals, they need to act equal, not go on these marches and behaving badly.” “I know a gay couple but they behave amazingly, no one would even be able to tell they’re gay.”</li> </ul>
I6	Heterosexual people are seen now as LGBTQ+ haters. The community doesn’t want acceptance, it wants to fight the majority group and impose their lifestyle. Schools are treating traditional families as wrong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I am heterosexual and nowadays I am considered a weird creature because of it. That’s what truly bothers me. I need to accept everything and every gender to exist (...) but they don’t accept my own opinions.”</li> <li>• “This shouldn’t be taught in schools (...) Now, they’re taught the traditional family is wrong.” “We are walking towards the subversion of our values.”</li> </ul>
I7	LGBTQ+ community was born to support people who were viewed as inferior, but now it’s becoming about identity and not sexuality. There are hidden agendas promoted by the left.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “It’s a community that positions itself to the left for more obscure reasons, because they have an agenda... and the left held their hand and said “I will complete that agenda, I will help you.”</li> <li>• “What do you want? Claps for being gay?”</li> </ul>



18	We already all have the same rights, they shouldn't have priority. Children shouldn't be put in the middle of it. Values are being inversed because the government cares more about the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "They're trying to force this on the children."</li> <li>• "A sex change surgery shouldn't have priority over a heart or brain tumor surgery... There is an inversion of basic values."</li> </ul>
19	The community wants more rights than the majority. People have to dress modestly to work. Children are going to be confused, learning that a man dressed as a woman is a woman.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "They want it all. They want preference in job vacancies. Why? That doesn't make any sense."</li> <li>• "The new flag has new colors (...) black is for the slaves. What's that have to do with anything?"</li> <li>• "Now, everything you say is discrimination, no one can say anything bad against them."</li> </ul>

Table D9: Analysis of the Interviews on the dimension of Gender Ideology

	Gender Ideology	
	Analysis	Quotes
I1	Was not able to define gender ideology. After being explained the term: she shouldn't be forced to put up with this agenda. Families are the most affected by gender ideology, "normal" families are now being discriminated against. Doesn't think any policy is needed on gender ideology, just let everyone live their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Gender ideology is entering our homes without us wanting to."</li> <li>• "I shouldn't be forced to put up with an agenda which I may or may not agree with."</li> <li>• "Families are the most affected by gender ideology."</li> <li>• "Gender ideology does not need to be combatted. I just wanted to be left alone, you know? So I'll just ignore it."</li> </ul>
I2	Gender ideology is not a big problem in Portugal yet, but it's starting to become one and we need to be careful. In the USA, a child can choose to change their gender without parents' approval. People who oppose it need to stand proudly without fear of judgement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "The movement starts to get inside schools, universities and in time they will be everywhere and I believe we must take a stand."</li> <li>• "The United States a child can choose... a 8 year-old child can decide she is attracted to girls (...) all that happens there will get here too, we would be naïve to think otherwise."</li> </ul>
I3	Was not able to define gender ideology. When explained the term, said that she had already talked about this in other answers, namely when talking about the LGBTQ+ community and how they want more rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "It's like that news article about the Miss Universe winner being a man who's now changed sex and won. But why? That doesn't make any sense. We are women, it doesn't make any sense."</li> </ul>
I4	Does not have a very formed view on the subject but has trouble understanding that 20, 100 genders can exist. Thinks gender ideology may be entering schools, and it's wrong for a teacher to impose their views on children, kids should trail their own path. Is against mixed gender bathrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "It's very difficult for me to talk about the subject because I am not very into it, but it's hard for me to understand where they get so many genders from."</li> <li>• "One time my daughter told me that a teacher told her that for her to understand if she likes one gender or the other she needs to try it all."</li> <li>• "<i>Chega</i> is completely against the mixed gender bathrooms, as am I."</li> </ul>
I5	Thought gender ideology meant gender equality. After being explained the term: gender ideology is a problem, children shouldn't decide their gender. <i>Chega</i> is right in prohibiting this in the schools, as well as the unisex bathrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Every day there's one of these news about the community, about the ideology and there are 5 year-old boys who say they're girls."</li> <li>• "The thing with mixed bathrooms, I'm against it, and they [<i>Chega</i>] are right to be against them."</li> <li>• "Any day I'll go into the bathroom and there is a man who says they're a woman and who knows what he will do to me!"</li> </ul>
I6	Gender ideology is a problem because it's being imposed on everything and nothing is natural. We don't need to combat gender ideology, just act naturally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Gender ideology is a problem because they're imposing it to us... Because nowadays we can't watch a TV show without there being for example a gay couple. Nothing against it, of course, but why is it in every TV show, every situation I'm at? It's never natural, it's always imposed."</li> <li>• "Nothing needs to be done to combat it, just act naturally"</li> </ul>

17	Gender ideology is a Marxist theory made to destroy the family. It infiltrates in schools because children spend most of their time at school and not at home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The biggest objective of gender ideology is destroying the family.”</li> <li>• “It should never be taught to the children, it confuses the children.”</li> <li>• “This should be presented to children as something that may happen, don’t discriminate, but what’s happening is it’s being promoted.”</li> </ul>
18	Gender ideology tries to control people, teach children about 100 genders, have mixed bathrooms at schools, give forms to children asking intimate questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Gender ideology has the goal of controlling the masses, indoctrinate people, make them not think for themselves.”</li> <li>• “They say there are more than 100 genders. What do you mean 100 genders?”</li> <li>• “We are against mixed bathrooms.”</li> </ul>
19	Thought gender ideology meant gender identity. After being explained: it’s infiltrating schools, teaching children that everyone can be whatever gender they want and sexualizing children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “They’re trying to teach children things that not even adults can explain.”</li> <li>• “There was a teacher that went to jail for saying that there are only two gender! That’s already in the biology books!”</li> <li>• “In the USA they’re having drag queens at schools, dancing and sexualizing children”</li> </ul>

Table D10: Analysis of the Interviews on the dimension of Feminism

	Feminism	
	Analysis	Quotes
I1	Feminism used to have its reason, but now women have the same rights, so feminists should focus on children who suffer from pedophilia, or that are raped. Feminism now focuses on the wrong things.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I don’t feel like the feminist fights are adequate in our society.”</li> <li>“The true fight could be for the girls of minorities who should be studying, not getting married and having children.”</li> </ul>
I2	Feminists don’t know what they’re defending. Feminism acts like it gives you freedom but it only gives you more problems. It’s a superficial movement, everything is for likes and engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“The feminist movement seems to have a good cause, but it’s a lie, it’s a façade. It gets engagement, popularity, likes and it leads to completely frustrated women.”</li> <li>“You ask a feminist ‘what rights do you believe in?’ and they don’t know what to answer.”</li> </ul>
I3	Unsure what feminism was, hasn’t researched a lot about it, but thinks it’s exaggerated, and though there is a lot to be done on equality, such as equal salaries and positions in the workplace, we can’t have it all at once.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I don’t know, sometimes I think it’s exaggerated. We want more, more, more. But we need to take it easy, we already have a lot.”</li> </ul>
I4	Believes in equality of rights and opportunity and thinks feminism focuses too much on women’s rights and not on men’s. Feminism has become too exaggerated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I am a feminine woman, I don’t relate to the feminist movement, I think the movement can be a little exaggerated... not exaggerated, but they’re always defending women’s rights and they sometimes forget men’s rights in society.”</li> </ul>
I5	The origin of feminism is good, but the current feminist movement is toxic and does not defend all women. It’s all about condemning men.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“I am not against the first feminism, those ladies who founded feminism. But feminism in 2023 is very toxic, they condemn men for everything and anything.”</li> <li>“Feminism doesn’t defend women because it never defended me.”</li> <li>“It does not defend women, it defends women who think like them.”</li> </ul>
I6	Feminism was important at a certain point and had its role, but now it’s subverting the values from the initial movement. Feminists now think empowerment is showing their breasts on the street and do abortions and say men are aggressors. We have lost the way of being feminine in the pursuit of being feminist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Nowadays, being a feminist is just talking badly about men, doing abortions and showing their breasts. That’s what they consider the feminist movement.”</li> <li>“The feminist movement was so important in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and now is completely subverting, the ideals they fight for (...) when we talk about equality of opportunities in women’s careers, we don’t see feminists in the negotiations.”</li> </ul>
I7	Feminism isn’t fighting for equality, it’s fighting for women being superior to men. Men and women can never be equal, and though sexism is wrong, feminism is harming society. Feminists shame non-feminists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Feminists don’t fight for the rights of women, for equality. I see feminists talking about men and women being equal, they’re not.”</li> <li>“I have agreed with feminism for a part of my life because I have felt</li> </ul>

		sexism, but I realized the answer to sexism isn't feminism."
18	Feminists don't support women who actually need help, they just want to revolt against men and make women hate men. They want to deconstruct family and society. Feminists don't have to tell women about female empowerment because that is a very personal question.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Feminists harm more than they help. I don't see feminists helping women who really need it. I don't see feminists supporting women who suffer from domestic violent, going to watch their court hearings. They're not there defending the woman, holding her hand."</li> <li>• "Men need women and women need men, this affects the family, affects society, affects everything, and that's what they [feminists] want."</li> </ul>
19	In Portugal, feminists mix feminism with women superiority over men. Women will never be equal to men, so everyone should do what they're biologically good at, and feminism fights for an equality that can't exist.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Feminism like this will never happen, the 2 genders will never be equal. The things they defend, equality of genders and opportunities... Sure, okay. But now saying a men is the same as a woman... No."</li> </ul>

Table D11: Analysis of the Interviewees' perceived alignment with *Chega*

	Alignment with <i>Chega</i>	
	Analysis	Quotes
I1	Claims to fully agree with <i>Chega's</i> views on gender. Believes no one has to fully agree with the party and that whenever she disagrees with something, she will outright say it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We live in a democracy, and no one should just have one party they identify with completely. In my case, I identify with <i>Chega</i> the most.”</li> <li>• “Yes, I fully agree with <i>Chega's</i> views on gender.”</li> </ul>
I2	Claims to fully agree with <i>Chega's</i> views on gender. It's a growing party and she wants to help it grow so it can keep combatting the ideologies that have been invading our society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Their fight is exactly what I've been saying, preserving children's infancy, their rights, and conserving it to the max. (...) <i>Chega's</i> fight is combatting all the lies, swim against the tide literally. It's still a small party, the right wing is very small in Portugal compared to Brazil, but it's gaining force, it's a growing movement walking in small steps, but I believe it will grow. If it depends on me, that will happen.”</li> </ul>
I3	Claims to fully agree with <i>Chega's</i> views on gender. Believes <i>Chega</i> is very focused on combatting violence against women. Mentions that <i>Chega</i> has women's sections so they can come together. (Did not mention this when asked about the alignment with the party, but the view on abortion is different from the party.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “The topic of violence against women is very worked on in the party.”</li> <li>• “My opinions on gender ideology and gender in general, I think are the party's ideals as well, I am not an exception. But everyone is free to have their own opinion.”</li> </ul>
I4	Claims to mostly agree with the party, but on questions such as reproductive rights she doesn't agree. What led her to the party in the first place was the need for stricter sentences for domestic violence perpetrators due to her own personal experience. Supports <i>Chega's</i> fight against mixed gender bathrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “About gender I think I identify with the party. About women's reproductive rights, I don't see myself in everything [of <i>Chega's</i> views]. I will admit, I don't know the party's statutes as well as I should, what they mention about these situations.”</li> <li>• “What got me into <i>Chega</i> was the criminal part. Our legislation is very, very light, and I see it in my day-to-day, because I have been through situations where I felt very penalized as a woman, as a mother, and unfortunately nothing serious happened to my ex-partner.”</li> <li>• “When I saw this part [of <i>Chega</i>] about women's rights retracted me a little bit, but I do agree that we should guarantee the right to life.”</li> </ul>
I5	Claims to mostly agree with the party. On the question of gender ideology, is in complete agreement. Has opposing views on abortion. Claims <i>Chega</i> has done good work fighting against mixed gender bathrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> is against abortion, I am in favor. They defend women and so do I. They defend children and so do I. (...) I am in favor of some things of the party and against others. That's how it is with everything.”</li> <li>• “I think in terms of gender, they [<i>Chega</i>] are completely right, gender ideology is exaggerated, mixed bathrooms, sex changes in children, all of that.”</li> </ul>
I6	Claims to fully agree with <i>Chega's</i> views on gender. The party isn't sexist, as people seem to think. Doesn't have a concrete proposal on gender equality because their policies are already for everyone.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “<i>Chega's</i> views are the same, or at least very similar to what I believe, that's why maybe I identify with <i>Chega</i> and not another party.”</li> <li>• “<i>Chega</i> is the opposite of what people like to claim, that the party is highly sexist, misogynist, etc.”</li> <li>• “We haven't done a concrete proposal on gender equality, because we don't like to do that distinction, our proposals are for men and women.”</li> </ul>

17	Claims to agree with <i>Chega</i> on almost everything regarding gender. Thinks one MP of <i>Chega</i> in particular talks too much about gender ideology and she doesn't agree with everything she says.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “From what I know, <i>Chega</i> goes exactly in accordance to my values, mostly on proposals about violence, against abortion.”</li> <li>• “That’s something feminists have not realized: <i>Chega</i> is in favor of women.”</li> <li>• “I agree with them, but I don’t think they’re always right.”</li> </ul>
18	Claims to fully agree with <i>Chega</i> ’s views on gender, particularly regarding the role of the family and maintenance of traditional roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “I am a member of <i>Chega</i> exactly because of that, I completely support their views, it’s a right-wing party, having family as its basis. We believe in traditions. (...) If we don’t have that basis, the house we’re building will crumble.”</li> </ul>
19	Claims to fully agree with <i>Chega</i> ’s views on gender. It’s a gender equal party internally. <i>Chega</i> is fighting gender neutral bathrooms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “We don’t defend the sexualization of children, we don’t defend the implementation of gender-neutral bathrooms. No, thank you.”</li> </ul>