

# ¿RENOVACIÓN O SUSTITUCIÓN? EL NUEVO PERFIL SOCIAL DEL CONGRESO

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La crisis de legitimidad política ha propiciado un debate sobre la representación, el papel de las élites y su funcionamiento. En los últimos años han surgido nuevos partidos que han sabido canalizar el malestar de la ciudadanía con sus representantes, consiguiendo representación a nivel nacional. Este trabajo traza el perfil social del nuevo Congreso de los Diputados tras las elecciones del 28-A, analizando si la entrada de nuevos partidos (Podemos, Ciudadanos y Vox) en las instituciones ha supuesto una renovación real del perfil social de la Cámara o si solo ha implicado la sustitución de las élites. Para ello se estudian las variables sexo, edad, nivel educativo y ocupación profesional de sus señorías a lo largo de la última etapa democrática, estableciendo una comparación en la que se analizan las diferencias y similitudes de perfil social entre los partidos nuevos y los tradicionales. Tras ello, se mide la distancia existente entre la sociedad española y sus representantes políticos mediante la aplicación del Índice de Desproporción Social.

**Palabras clave:** Élite política, perfil social, nuevos partidos, Congreso de los Diputados, sesgo social, representación

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Spanish democracy is experiencing a convulsive period. Despite the fact that during the current democratic period there has been a structural discontent of citizenship with their representatives (Montero et al., 1999), coinciding with the economic and financial crisis, a crisis of political representation and trust has worsened. It stays in time. During the mobilizations of 15M thousands of citizens went to the squares of the most important Spanish cities shouting "they don't represent us!"; politicians and parties are considered the third problem by Spaniards and the confidence index in their work has diminished enormously since 2008 (in April 2019, only 2.7% of Spaniards think that the political situation is good or very good, according to the CIS barometer). As Subirats (2015: 449) points out, "the crisis of functionality of institutionalized politics has increased to such an extent that, today, a majority of citizens in southern Europe perceive *politicians* as part of the problem and not as part of the solution." But in turn, new state-level parties have emerged in Spain, Podemos, Ciudadanos and, more recently, Vox, which have managed to settle among the established parties in the first general elections in which they have participated.

Faced with this situation of change and generalized uncertainty, it is worth asking: How has the Great Recession affected the Spanish political system? Has it affected the social profile of the deputies? Do the new parties present profiles different from the traditional ones? Are there differences between the new parties? Have the profiles of traditional parties changed? And as a whole, after the Great Recession, are representatives more like their electors? These are the fundamental questions whose answers guide this chapter.

The main objective is to analyse the impact of the Great Recession on the Spanish political system and on the social profile of the Congress of Deputies. In the first place, a brief contextualization is presented, highlighting some general effects of the Great Recession in the Spanish political system. Later, using the theory of the descriptive representation of Pitkin (1967), the changes in the social profile of the Spanish deputies are analysed to see the impact of the Great Recession. To do this, we analyse the social profile of members the Congress of Deputies comparing the legislature that began after the general elections of the April 28, 2019 with that before the crisis. We focus on sex, age, place of birth, studies and profession, which are the variable for which complete information can be found. Finally, the social distance between representatives and represented is measured using the Social Bias Index (SBI), to know if after the Great Recession political representatives resemble or are more differentiated from citizens than choose to represent them.

Data come from BAPOLCON<sup>1</sup> a database that contains 2439 records of all the deputies who have occupied a seat since 1977 (constituent legislature) until 2019 (13th legislature) in Congress.

## **2. THE EFFECTS OF THE GREAT RECESSION IN THE SPANISH POLITICAL SYSTEM**

The Great Recession has generated a new political scenario that needs analysis. This section focuses on the study of the changes produced in the party system, the selection of candidates, and the renewal of elites, all of three fundamentals to understand the impact of the crisis on the Spanish political system.

### **2.1. Changes in the party system**

The Great Recession has led to transformations in the European political system (Freire et al., 2016; Bosco and Verney, 2016; Verney and Bosco, 2013; Magalhães, 2014; Bermeo and Bartels, 2014; Morlino and Raniolo, 2017) that may modify the social profile of the elite. The increase in the number of parties and the rate of renewal of the elites are some of these changes (Kakepaki, M. et al., 2018: 176).

In Spain, three new state-wide parties have emerged and consolidated achieving a large number of seats in different chambers: Podemos (left) and Ciudadanos (centre to right) in 2015, and Vox (right or extreme right) in 2019. The effective number of parliamentary parties (ENPP, see Laakso and Taagepera, 1979: 79-80)<sup>2</sup> shows a high level of fragmentation: until 2011, the average ENPP was 2.6, never having reached 3 but the parliament that emerged from the elections on April 28, 2019 has the highest ENPP of history: 4.8. Apart from greater fragmentation, the presence of the new parties in Congress has led to a greater ideological polarization, as has been happening in the rest of Europe (van Kessel 2013, Pappas and Kriesi 2015). Podemos (located at position 2.3 on the left-right scale) and Vox (at position 9.3) expand the ideological spectrum and raise the Polarization Index<sup>3</sup> from 3.1 in 2008 to 4.9 in 2019.

Hence, we can compare two different scenarios: one in 2008 in which two major parties (PSOE and PP) brought together more than 90% of the seats in Congress, and another in 2019 with five state-wide parties, the most fragmented and polarized Congress since 1979. These changes are historical milestones of great impact on the political life in Spain and its governance. It is no coincidence that the 11th legislature (2015) was the first in which it was not possible to form a government, forcing the dissolution of the Chamber within six months of its constitution. In the following legislature (2016), the fragmentation of Congress allowed

a change of majorities and government support, producing the first successful vote of no confidence in Spain (2018), replacing the PP (right) with the PSOE (centre to left) in the government.

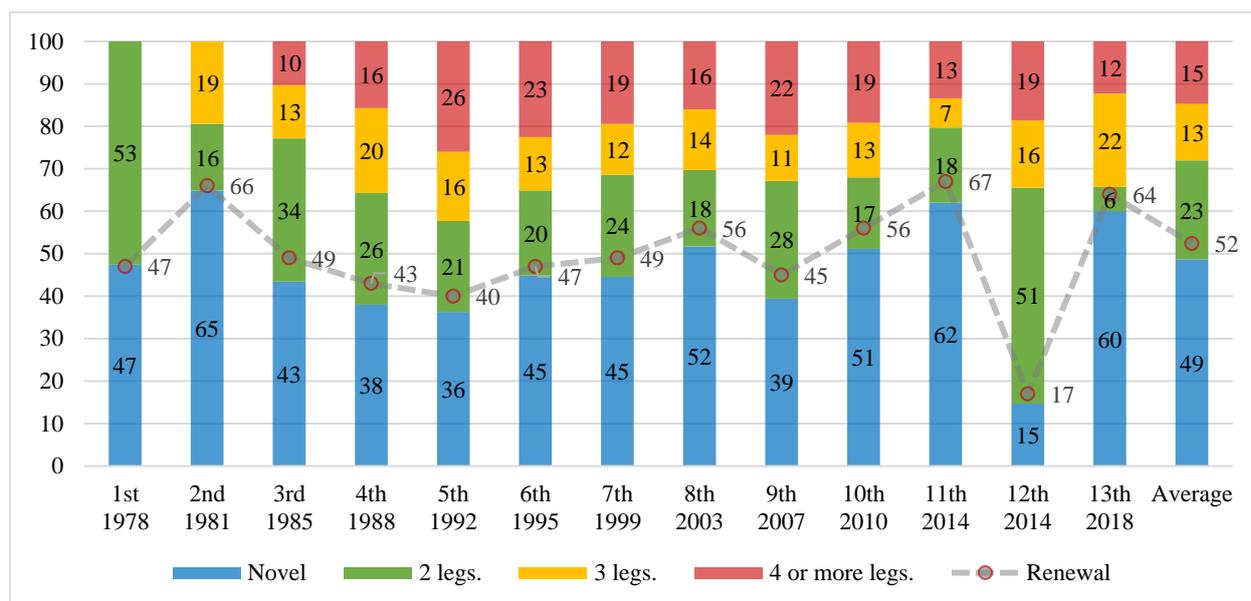
### **b) Selection of candidates**

Paralleling the Great Recession and the emergence of new parties, there has been the opening of selection methods. Along with the forms of recruitment, internal democracy or other selection methods determine who can become a candidate, which has an impact on the social profile of parliamentary groups and chambers in general (Cordero and Coller, 2018: 4, 18). New and old parties try to improve their electoral results and/or reduce the perception of distance between citizens and politicians (Coller et al., 2018a). Specifically, in Spain, Podemos and Ciudadanos were born having primaries as the backbone for selecting their candidates to electoral lists, and the PSOE and the PP, the latter since 2018, elected their leaders by primaries, which then have the ability to configure the electoral lists. When the "non-official" or "non-continuist" candidacy wins in the primaries, there is a risk that the lists will be highly renewed. In addition, the advance in internal democracy in the parties favours social diversification and the presence of traditionally underrepresented profiles in the legislative bodies (Kakepaki et al, 2018: 196; Jiménez-Sánchez et al, 2018).

### **c) Renewal of the elites**

Another characteristic of the political system to take into account is the renewal of the elites. The continuity of the deputies after holding elections is understood as a "sign of institutionalization of a system and helps to define the style of the institution itself and its political elite" (Jerez et al., 2013: 871). Whether or not deputies have (shared) experience as political representatives can influence the functioning of the Chamber (Coller and Santana, 2009).

Figure 6.1. Experience (number of legislatures) and the renewal rate (%) by legislature.



Source: from the database BAPOLCON

Figure 6.1 shows the composition of each legislature according to the experience of deputies in Congress (measured in terms of legislatures) and the rate of renewal. The rate of renewal is understood as the percentage of the Chamber that was not part of it in the previous legislature. It is observed that the elections carried out during the crisis (except for the 12th legislature when considered as the result of the failed 2015 term) yield results with high renovation rates of the Chamber (whose average renewal rate is 52%). Specifically, the elections that gave birth to the 11th legislature in 2015 have the highest renewal rate in history (67%). It was the first time that Ciudadanos and Podemos, not present in Congress, participated in a general election, obtaining 40 and 42 seats respectively (out of 350).

The 2019 elections follow this trend and are the third with the highest renewal rate (64%), well above the average for the period (52%). None of the 24 deputies of Vox was in the previous legislature and the "new" parties present high renewal rates (61% Ciudadanos and 52% Podemos). The PP has a renovation rate of 49%, although they stand out in the percentage of deputies with political experience (29% with 4 or more legislatures and 20% with 3 legislatures of experience). However, the most striking data is that of the PSOE, with a renewal rate of 72% (68% of novels). This may be due to internal electoral processes (such as the one that the PSOE experienced)<sup>4</sup>, when several candidates compete internally, the winner does not usually count with those politicians who supported the rival candidacy when formulating the lists.

### 3. THE IMPACT OF THE GREAT RECESSION ON THE SOCIAL PROFILE OF THE ELITE: CHANGES OR TRENDS?

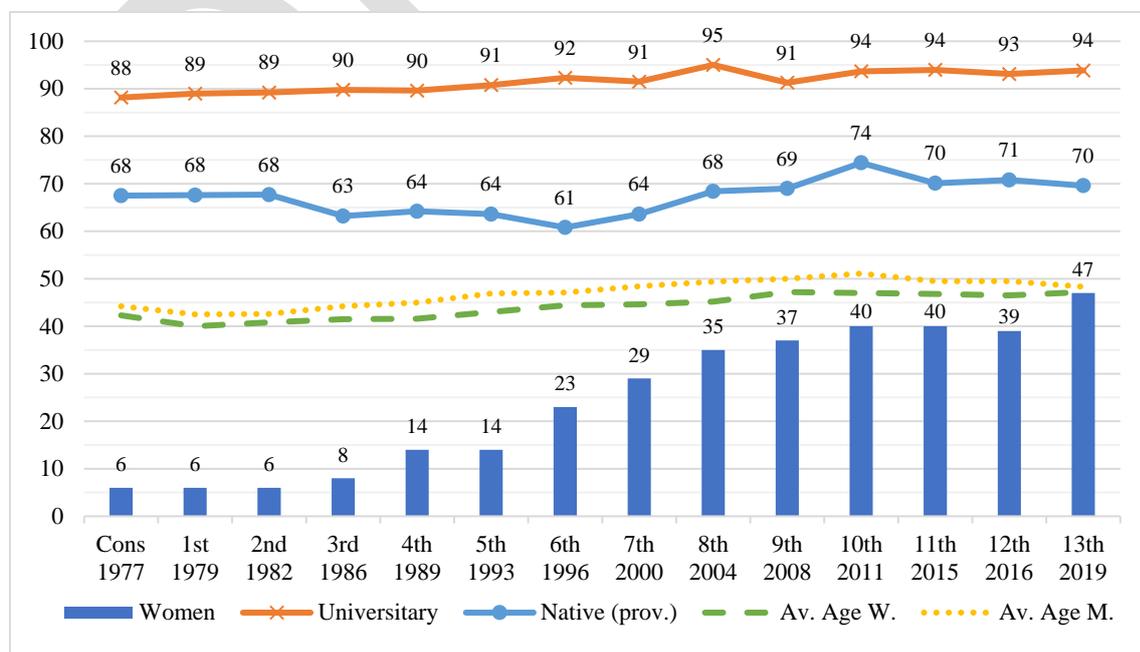
Once analysed some elements of the Spanish political system that have been modified after the Great Recession, we study its impact on the social profiles of the elites. To do this, we first present an evolution of the historical profile, with special emphasis on the comparison between pre-crisis and crisis legislatures<sup>5</sup>. Subsequently, the social profile of the new parties that emerged during the Great Recession is analysed, in order to finish studying its possible consequences on the profiles of traditional parties.

The composition and functioning of political elites are crucial to understanding the type of regime in a country (Parry, 2005: 3), so that a new composition of the Chamber with different characteristics from the last legislatures, can affect its functioning (Alcántara and Freidenberg, 2009: 424).

#### 3.1. Historical comparison: Changes or trends?

The study of the social profile of MPs focuses on the analysis of five sociodemographic variables: age, sex, place of birth, studies and profession. In order to appreciate the possible impact of the Great Recession on the social profile of the deputies, it is necessary that we make a brief review of the main characteristics of the Chamber for each of the legislatures.

Figure 6.2. Percentage of women, university students, natives and age (average) by legislature.



Source: from the database BAPOLCON.

Figure 6.2 shows the historical evolution of these variables (except for the profession). The existence of very identifiable historical trends is striking, which suggests that there have been no great variations related to the Great Recession. As in Kakepaki et. al., (2018), the changes of social profile in the elite in Spain after this period are limited to some variables. Taking as reference the 2011 legislature (new parties did not enter Congress until the 2015 elections), it can be observed that the average age of the deputies has been practically constant, as well as the difference of approximately 3 years between men (older) and women (younger). With some alteration, there has been a minimum aging of the Chamber, reaching its maximum in the 10th legislature (51 years men, 47 women). As of that moment, the average age at 48 years has remained, somewhat higher than in other European parliaments, set between 40 and 45 years (Best, 2006: 28).

A very similar evolution can be seen in the proportion of MPs with university credentials in Congress, 92% on average for the entire democratic period, above that average since 2011. These high levels of education mean a high level of institutionalized cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2000: 146-148), which shows that education is a key factor access the elite (Keller, 1963: 121; Putnam, 1976: 28).

The most striking upward trend is the rise in the percentage of women in the Chamber. As in the European case, the increase of women in the organs of political representation has been progressive during the last decades, advancing towards parity. From 6% of deputies that were in the first two legislatures, the incorporation of women has been a constant until stagnating around 40% in recent legislatures<sup>6</sup>. However, in the 13th legislature, a historical record has been reached (47%). We will have to wait to know its evolution in the following legislatures. However, the occupation of the most important positions, depending on each party, has remained unequal (Valiente et al., 2003, Jerez et al., 2013).

Finally, Figure 6.2 shows the evolution of the percentage of natives of province in which they were elected. The province has been used as a reference for the natives because it coincides with the electoral district. It is the trend with more variations and the one that we think may be more related to the Great Recession. Although with minor ups and downs, the highest level of natives is reached after the elections of 2011 (74%), maintaining levels above 70% for the following legislatures. Contrary to regional chambers, Congress keeps the higher proportion of immigrants among MPs (Coller et al. 2018b).

Regarding the professions, the tendency is towards greater diversity, although historically the phenomenon observed by Weber (1946) has been kept in Congress: the predominance of professionals related to the law and education (around 20% each). Both professions require qualities in their development that encourage or promote skills to exercise the "profession of the politician", to which Weber called "elective affinity". Weber's (1946) concept of "dispensability" also may help to build an explanation of the phenomenon: contrary to workers or entrepreneurs or some liberal professionals, professionals of the law are highly dispensable like civil servants (most professors are), who can come back to office after serving in Parliament. (Kakepaki et al., 2018: 194). However, the proportion of teachers is decreasing since 2011 (13% in 2019), increasing the proportion of liberal professions and politicians by profession.

Thus, based on historical data, the parliamentary type according to the socio-demographic characteristics of the Chamber would be a man, between 45 and 50 years old, born in the province for which the seat is obtained, university and professional of the law or teacher as most likely occupations. This picture does not differ much with what other studies have concluded (Coller, 2008: 139, Serrano and Bermúdez, 2016: 43, Coller et. al., 2018b, Jerez et. al. 2013). However, even if there is no significant variation in the general historical profile of Congress, during the Great Recession extreme values have coincided: it has been the period with the highest percentage of MPs with university credentials, natives, women, old age MPs (except for the minimum rejuvenation of the 13th term), and when the diversification of professions multiplied.

### **3.2. New political parties**

One of the main consequences of the Great Recession has been the emergence of new parties, although there is still a lot not known about them. Do they nurture their parliamentary groups with people are different from traditional parties? Are all the profiles of new parties similar or are there differences between them?

Table 6.1. Social profile of MPs of new Spanish parties in the 9th (2015) and 13th (2019) legislatures (in percentages except for age).

	CS		UPs		Vox	Total MPs	
	2015	2019	2015	2019	2019	2015	2019
Women	20	39	51	55	42	40	47
Average age	46	46	41	43	47	48	48
University training	93	96	86	86	100	93	94
Born in electoral district	65	60	54	69	70	68	68
Workers	3	0	5	7	4	2	3
Managers	18	16	2	2	13	9	8
Law-related professions	28	32	12	19	33	24	20
Professors	5	7	14	19	8	17	17
Liberal professions	15	19	20	17	13	13	13
Not known	8	2	9	10	13	11	13
Seats	40	57	69	42	24	350	350

Source: from the database BAPOLCON

Table 6.1 compares the social profiles of new parties, seeing their evolution since they appeared in 2015 (except Vox). We focus on the variables for which there is reliable and complete information. Regarding the number of women, Podemos presents more women than men among their deputies, achieving the highest percentages in history among large parties (55%). Ciudadanos, however, have more difficulties incorporating women. In 2019, the percentage of women increased (39%), although it remained below the Chamber's average (47%). Vox, despite not supporting the official gender quotas in the electoral lists, enters the Congress of Deputies with 42% of women, below the average but above Ciudadanos.

As identified by Linz (2001) during the Transition, age variations of the elites can be an important indicator to identify moments of institutional crisis or political change. When we look at the ages of the deputies, we see that all new parties are below the average of the Chamber (48 years), showing that they place in the electoral lists young people, most likely unexperienced. Podemos stands out with an age 5 years lower than the average of the camera in 2019, although in 2015 they were even 7 years below the average. Ciudadanos' MPs are 2 years younger than the average, with their female deputies standing out with up to 4 less, and Vox one year below the average.

Congress has presented traditionally higher rates of natives (MPs who were born in the same province for which obtain the seat) than regional parliaments (Coller et. al, 2018b). In the case of new parties, without territorial implantation, we could expect this data to be higher than the average (68%). However, the new parties present percentages of natives similar to the rest of the parties (Vox 70%; Podemos 69%), except Ciudadanos (60%). Podemos was 14 points under the average in 2015.

In Spain, two European tendencies have been reinforced since the Great Recession: quotas superior to 90% of MPs with university formation and higher rates in right parties than lefties. Ciudadanos (96%) and Vox (100%), very sensitive with this issue, contribute to increasing those tendencies. Podemos, with 86% in 2015 and 2019, is the one with the lowest number of university students, mainly due to the low rate of male university graduates (79%).

In the professions of the deputies, we find that the new parties have elements of continuity and others of rupture with the historical tendencies. Ciudadanos and Vox are adjusted to the parties of their ideological bloc, with high presences of managers and businessmen, as well as professionals of the law. The same goes for Podemos, which has a higher percentage than the average number of employees and teachers, as has traditionally corresponded to leftist parties (Coller et al., 2018b). However, as it appears in Table 6.1, the new parties also present novel professional characteristics. For example, they have an over the average (13.3%) number of liberal professionals, 19.4% Ciudadanos and 16.7% Podemos in 2019, that increases the diversification of professions. Vox stands out for having two soldiers in his ranks and Ciudadanos for having almost no parliamentarians without a known profession outside of politics, which is in line with his political discourse about what the profession of the politician should look like: professional and technical.

### **3.3. The possible effects on traditional parties**

The two parties that have alternated in the government of Spain since 1982, PSOE and PP, have been suffering an important loss of seats since 2015, caused mainly by the appearance of the three new state parties. But despite this, they remain the most represented parties in 2019. However, how has the Great Recession affected their social profiles? Have the dynamics of the new parties translated into changes in traditional parties?

Table 6.2. Social profile of MPs of traditional Spanish parties in the 9th (2008) and 13th (2019) legislatures (in percentages except for age)

	PP		PSOE		Congress	
	2008	2019	2008	2019	2008	2019
Women	32	53	43	50	37	47
Average age	50	49	48	50	49	48
University training	92	97	88	92	90	94
Born in electoral district	65	67	65	74	66	68
Workers	4	2	9	3	6	3
Managers	19	8	18	3	8	8
Law-related professions	31	21	13	13	22	20
Professors	14	9	30	23	23	17
Liberal professions	11	10	8	9	6	13
Not known	7	17	7	15	7	13
Seats	154	66	169	123	350	350

Source: from the database BAPOLCON

Table 6.2 shows the comparison of the social profiles of PP and PSOE before and after the Great Recession (2008 and 2019). Surprise the evolution in the percentage of women of the PP, from 31.8% in 2008 to 53% in 2019, which make it the second party with more women among its ranks after Podemos. The PSOE has accompanied the general trend of growth, always something above the average.

Unlike the new parties, the traditional ones have ages (49 years) something above the average (47). This is due to the relationship between age and seniority of the party: the more parliamentary experience you have, the more likely you are to have a higher average age.

After the Great Recession, both formations have increased their percentages of university deputies by 5 points. This impulse is mainly due to the increase in university women, which in the case of the PP go from 90% to 100% and in the PSOE from 89% to 97%. The proportion of 92% of university students of the PSOE, although very close to the average, confirms the European tendency of lower percentages of the parties of the left (Kakepaki et al., 2018: 194).

The Great Recession has contributed to professional diversification in the PP and PSOE. It is observed how the most common professions in both parties, professionals of the law and teachers decrease respectively (Coller, 2008, Coller et al, 2018b), as well as managers and

businessmen drop sharply. On the opposite side, although the increases of these professions are general for the whole parliament, PP and PSOE are between 3 and 5 points above the average in civil servants and deputies without a known profession. This fact differentiates them from new parties, possibly due to the "career politician": traditional parties have a history and consolidated structures (for example, youth groups) that allow people to be professionally dedicated to the party for years, prior to being deputies.

#### 4. SOCIAL BIAS INDEX: THE ELITES SOCIAL GAP

The changes that have taken place in the profile of the elite after the Great Recession in Spain have been able to go in two directions, one that brings the camera closer to being a social mirror of society or another that opens the gap between the social characteristics of representatives and represented. Are new parties more like society than traditional ones? Has the social gap increased or decreased? To answer these questions, the Social Bias Index (SBI) has been applied, devised by Ross (1944), and used by Norris and Lovenduski (1995: 96), Coller (2008) and Coller et al. (2018b). The SBI offers us a numerical indicator of the distance between the profile of parliamentarians and that of the society they represent, allowing us to measure the depth of the social gap for each variable. Its calculation is simple:  $SBI = \% \text{ social group X in Congress} / \% \text{ social group X in society}^7$ .

The results of the SBI vary around the value 1, which implies equality in the social profile of representatives and represented. Values below 1 imply underrepresentation of a social group in the parliament (eg women); values greater than 1, overrepresentation (eg, university graduates). If the value is far from 1, the difference between proportions will be large.

Table 6.3. Index of social disproportion in the 9th and 13th legislatures (except the age that is a subtraction of means)

	Women		Average age		Born in electoral district		University training	
	2008	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
PP	0,6	1	3	-0,9	0,8	1	4,9	5,1
PSOE	0,8	1	1	-0,4	1,2	1,3	4,7	4,9
CS	-	0,7	-	-4,2	-	0,8	-	5,1
UP	-	1,1	-	-7,3	-	1,2	-	4,5
VOX	-	0,8	-	-3,1	-	0,9	-	5,3
TOTAL	0,7	0,9	2	-2,2	1,1	1,2	4,8	4,9

Source: from the database BAPOLCON and Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE)

As in almost all societies, women make up half of the population but they are usually underrepresented in institutions. After the Great Recession, the SBI confirms the trend towards proportional representation, increasing the average of the Chamber by +0.2 points to reach 0.9. In the elections of 2019, Podemos and PP exceed 1 in the IDS of the genre. The other parties are still approaching, although they do not arrive yet.

Age has taken a turn. Before the crisis, parliamentarians were on average two years older than the population, and in 2019 it is the other way around. This is motivated by the aging population and the influence of new parties, which include deputies 4 years younger than the average. By sex, the average age of men coincides in the population and the Congress (48 years), while the female deputies have a slightly lower average age than that of women in society.

The SBI of the natives, that is, those who have been chosen from the autonomous community of their birth, presents figures very close to 1, which indicates a lot of parity between the population and the deputies. Only in Ciudadanos and Vox there are fewer natives than in society. The traditional parties increase their presence from 2008 to 2019. These small changes do not indicate a change in the general trend, characterizing Spanish society with percentages of sedentary lifestyle traditionally similar to those of the elites (Serrano and Bermúdez, 2016).

For Genieys (1998: 20), the high educational level of the political elite is a consequence of the social change of Spain experienced during the seventies, reflected also in the increase of more than 10 percentage points of the rate of Spanish university students between 1981 and 2011 (INE, 2011). However, this does not prevent university students from being very overrepresented in the Chamber (almost 5 times more), without significant differences between parties or between before and after the Great Recession.

Table 6.4. Index of Social Bias for professions in the 9th and 13th legislatures.

	Workers		Managers		Law-related professions <sup>8</sup>		Professors		Liberal professions <sup>9</sup>	
	2008	2019	2008	2019	2008	2019	2008	2019	2008	2019
PP	0,1	0	1,8	1,2	44,2	30,3	3,1	2	5,2	5,4
PSOE	0,1	0	1	0,5	19,9	19,1	6,9	4,9	3,6	6,1
CS	-	0	-	2,6	-	45,1	-	1,5	-	13,9
UP	-	0,1	-	0,4	-	27,1	-	4,1	-	11,9
VOX	-	0,1	-	2	-	47,6	-	1,8	-	8,9
TOTAL	0,1	0	1,4	1,2	32,2	28,1	5,2	3,6	5,1	9,5

Source: from the database BAPOLCON and Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE)

Professions without qualifications or manuals are the most common in the population, but these are the least among the deputies who underrepresent them with an SBI very close to 0. The two most frequent professions among parliamentarians, professionals of the law and professors, are logically overrepresented. Although the ideological blocs of the right (PP, Ciudadanos, and Vox) in the professions related to the law have a greater gap, and the parties of the left (PSOE and Podemos), they overrepresent more the professors. This division between the left and the right is also true for managers and entrepreneurs, who are overrepresented in right parties (SBI over 1) and underrepresented in left parties (SBI under 1). Finally, the influence of the new parties on the overrepresentation of liberal professionals, professions associated with a high educational level and appearing almost 10 times more in the elite than in society.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Although there is a discontent of Spanish society with its political representatives that is structural (Montero et al., 1999), with the economic crisis has generated another of confidence and political representation. In this chapter, we have studied the impact of the Great Recession on the Spanish political scene.

First, the most significant changes in the party system have been analysed. The entry of the new parties has led to the most fragmented and ideologically polarized configurations of the Congress. They have adopted and helped to consolidate measures of internal democracy in the parties (also used by the PSOE and more recently PP), which favour social diversification (Kakepaki et al., 2018: 196) and the renewal of the elites. These new

characteristics (fragmentation, polarization, independentism, diversification and the inexperience inherent to renewal) can affect the functioning of parliament and its ability to reach agreements (Coller and Santana, 2009).

Secondly, the profile of political elites has been studied. Has it changed after the Great Recession? The main conclusion is that there are no sudden changes in the general profile of the Chamber, but there are historical trends confirmed or catalysed by the crisis. However, it can not be ignored that after the Great Recession has reached extreme values of the set of variables studied: has been the period with higher percentages of women, university, native, older (except the minimum rejuvenation in the XIII term) and of greater diversification of professions. It seems that in times of crisis the parties opt for more socially legitimized profiles, such as university students or natives.

New parties play an important role in the relative change of profile of the elite after the Great Recession. Podemos highlight especially in the increase of women and the rejuvenation of the elite. Ciudadanos and Vox, in addition to having representatives younger than the average, maintain the historically upward trend of deputies with university education. The new parties also contribute to the diversification of professions in the Chamber. They present more liberal professionals and few deputies without a known profession. However, the classic left-right axis continues to work: Ciudadanos and Vox present more professional profiles related to business or professionals of the law, historically belonging to the right parties, while in Podemos we find higher percentages of employees and teachers, more common historically in the parties of the left (Coller et al., 2018b).

The traditional parties do not present so many changes. They remain close to the average in percentages of university students and natives (upward trends) and the experience of their deputies slows down the rejuvenation of the elite. The PP goes from 32% to 53% in the presence of women, accompanying the general trend. In the professions, it stands out that these parties are above the average regarding civil servants or deputies without another profession known outside of politics. This may be because they are historical parties and have consolidated structures, such as youth groups, which endow the party with cadres, encouraging in part the professionalization of political activity.

The third aspect studied is the social gap. Have these changes made politicians more like the society they represent? Are new or traditional parties more like society? It depends. The SBI tells us that after the Great Recession Congress of Deputies is more like society in some variables, such as the number of women, very close to proportional representation but not

getting it; less in others (the increase of natives in parliament makes them to be minimally overrepresented, university students remain largely oversized) and is professionally more heterogeneous, reducing the distance with the classical professions (professionals of the law and teaching) but increasing the already existing overrepresentation of liberal professions, one of effects of entry of new parties along with the investment of age. The new parties are somewhat more distant from society than the traditional ones in sex and age (they are somewhat less equal and younger), although they are not all the same: the SBI indicates that Podemos (left) differs from Ciudadanos and Vox (right) in some aspects, such as the overrepresentation of women and natives and the lower overrepresentation of university students and professionals of the law.

The elites are key actors to analyse the socio-political relationships of a system (Rahman, 2012: 362). After this critical moment of transformation, it becomes necessary to continue measuring the evolution of these impacts in the near future. Only in this way can we better understand the new characteristics and functioning of the Spanish political system.

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<sup>1</sup> BAPOLCON has been built over the years thanks to the research project “Ciudadanía y parlamentarios en tiempos de crisis y renovación democrática: el caso comparado de España en el contexto del sur de Europa” (CSO2016-78016-R) and “La elite política autonómica en la España democrática” (1980-2005) (BSO2003-02596). It has been built and updated by Xavier Coller, Andrés Vázquez, Manuel Portillo, Pablo Domínguez, Andrés Benítez, Beatriz Carrasco, Ana María Gómez, José Luís Gómez, Álvaro Mariscal, Iván Pérez, Fernando Ramírez de Luis and Daniel Valdivia. The authors thank Xavier Coller for the assignment of the database for the preparation of this chapter. For more information, you can contact the authors.

<sup>2</sup> The effective number of parliamentary parties is calculated with the following formula:  $ENPP = 1 / n \sum pi^2$ , where  $pi$  is the proportion of seats in party  $i$ . In 2015 and 2016 the ENPP was 4.2 and 3.9, respectively, which already broke the historical average close to 2 so far.

<sup>3</sup> The Polarization Index measures the distribution of the parties according to their sizes in the traditional ideological scale, where 1 is extreme left and 10 extreme right. According to Taylor and Herman (1971) it is calculated as follows:  $IPP = \sum Vi / 100 * (xi - \mu)^2$ , “ $Vi$ ” being the percentage of seats in each party; “ $xi$ ” the position occupied by the party on the 1-10 scale; and “ $\mu$ ” the average of the positions of the parties on the scale. The position of each party in the ideological scale has been obtained from the citizen evaluation in the studies of the CIS 2750, of 2008 and 3242/0 of 2019.

<sup>4</sup> One of the consequences of the integration of primaries is that it can generate internal divisions. It has happened in Podemos (Pablo Iglesias list vs. Íñigo Errejón list, 2017), in the PP (Soraya Sáenz de Santamaría vs. Pablo Casado, 2018), and in the PSOE, with the striking case of Pedro Sánchez, which has imposed on two occasions in the PSOE primaries (against Eduardo Madina in 2014 and Susana Díaz and Patxi López in 2017) never being the official candidate.

<sup>5</sup> While there were general elections in 2008, the authors consider the 2011 elections as the first after the Great Recession, due to the lack of diagnosis and crisis awareness in 2008.

<sup>6</sup> In 2007, during the 8th legislature, the equality law was passed, which requires parties to present at least one distribution per sex of 40-60% in their lists, while requiring proportions of 2 and 3 for each group 5 on the electoral lists, but without establishing the order they should carry (no zipper list).

<sup>7</sup> For sex and age, data are used from the 2008 and 2018 “Cifras de Población” of the Instituto Nacional de Estadística (INE). The average age is calculated only for those over 18 years old that marks the age of legal age in Spain to be able to exercise the right to vote or be able to stand for the vote. For the rest of the variables (birthplace, educational level and professions) is used the “Censo de Población” of 2011, also from the INE. The percentage of professions is calculated on the total of employed persons.

<sup>8</sup> The category “professionals of the law” includes judges, lawyers, prosecutors, etc.

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<sup>9</sup> The category "other liberal professions" refers to professions of a liberal and highly qualified nature, such as nurses, pharmacists, economists, journalists, archaeologists, computer scientists, chemists, veterinarians, psychologists, political scientists, sociologists, foremen, publicists, and other professions that can resemble this criterion. The percentage of these professions separately is so low that it has been decided to group to improve the analysis.

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