

What obstacles do women in politics face?

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Women in politics

- Women are under-represented in politics, at all levels
 - Supply: women's preferences and choices, lack of self-confidence (Fox and Lawless, 2004), dislike competition and risk
 - Demand: women encounter obstacles in the process of political recruitment (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995)
 - The role of parties
 - The role of voters
 - The role of political process: Electoral rules, information....

Gender quotas in candidate lists

- Target the party.
 - Parties, in their role as gatekeepers, may not put women forward as candidates (e.g., Kunovich and Paxton, 2005). This in turn depends on the level of political culture and on the party ideology
- Research shows that gender quotas in candidate lists
 - increase the share of elected women
 - increase the quality of politicians (Baltrunaite, Bello, Casarico and Profeta 2014 for Italy; Besley et al. 2017 for Sweden)
 - Because better men are elected! *The crisis of the mediocre man*

Double preference voting conditioned on gender

- Target the voters
 - Baltrunaite, Casarico, Profeta and Savio (2017) show that an Italian law which introduces for municipalities with more than 5000 residents
 - Gender quotas: neither sex can represent more than $\frac{2}{3}$ of the total number of candidates in candidate lists
 - Double preference voting conditioned on gender
- Increases the share of women elected (we compare municipalities below and above the 5000 threshold)

Electoral rules: Majoritarian versus proportional

Several studies have found that female political representation is higher in PR than in MAJ because:

- Candidate characteristics: PR promote a balance and diverse ticket, MAJ the strongest candidate (Norris, 1985).
- Incumbency: fewer incumbents are re-elected under PR (Norris, 2006).
- District magnitude: PR have higher district magnitude (Rule, 1987; Welch and Studlar, 1990; Meireles et al., 2017).
- Nomination procedures: in PR the recruitment process is more centralized, less need to self-nomination (Norris and Lovenduski, 1995; Matland and Studlar, 1996).

The quality of politicians is higher in MAJ than PR (Galasso and Nannicini)

Profeta and Woodhouse (2019): More women in PR but not lower quality. We find that with PR the best female candidates are not elected. Quality would have increased even more had the best female candidates elected!

More women in politics: Consequences

- Quality and selection
- Better performance? Women are less corrupted, less absent, more concrete.... (Brollo and Troiano, 2016)
- Agenda: public policies are different.
 - Research on developing countries (India) find that women political leaders take care of social issues, welfare, health, education more than men. They care about women's needs (Chattopadhyay and Duflo, 2004)
 - They may change the allocation of spending rather than the total amount: more expenditure in childcare (Profeta, 2019)