

### Definition and Purpose

- = mechanism to guarantee a certain percentage of women are present either (1) the ballot paper or (2) in parliament
- act as a process and a facilitator of women's political inclusion
- compensate for the many gendered barriers of accessing political office

### Types of Gender Quota's

- Constitutional (e.g. France, Rwanda) → aka reserved seats: are usually enshrined in a country's constitution and guarantee that a certain proportion/number of parliamentary seats are reserved for women
- Voluntary (e.g. Scandinavian countries; Germany) → quota's are voluntarily set by political parties to facilitate the nomination of a certain number or proportion of women candidates
- Legislative (e.g. ROI, Belgium, Spain, Poland, Argentina) → are enshrined in the election law, political party law or other comparable law of a country; usually apply to the nomination stage of candidate selection

### Application of Quota's

- Results /Outcome (Reserve Seats)
- Nomination (Candidate Selection)

### Effectiveness of Quota's (Franceschet et al, 2012)

- imposing significant quota obligations and penalties
- strong political will
- combining (fit) with institutional structures

### Reasons for Movement

### Reasons for Movement (cont)

- progress in women's representation is slow, static, and subject to reversals
- growing pressures on states/political parties since 90s to tackle women's under-representation
- Ireland is ranked 104th of the world today
- endogenous pressure:** e.g. women's movements, growing electoral competition, political parties
- exogenous pressure:** e.g. UN, and the EU

### Reasons for Implication

- women's mobilisation
- democratic renewal/change
- international pressure (UN)
- elite support and strategic considerations - > often times key if positive action measures are to be introduced

### Reason for Differences in Success

- Issues of system fit -> easier to 'fit' gender quota with PR-List electoral system
- Placement rules/mandates
- Sanctions, compliance and enforcement - > how are the quotas enforced? financial, disqualification, list rejection, etc.
- winnable seats
- political leadership & will
- political & wider societal culture

### Lessons Learned

- it takes at least three electoral cycles to see numbers increase
- Resistance from 'local' party and resentment from male candidates
- Quotas have been associated with an increase in the introduction of women-friendly policy legislative proposals
- need to manage expectations: "Women elected following the introduction of gender quotas shouldn't carry the sole responsibility 'to change the system'"

### Gender Quota's in Ireland

- In Ireland, legislative gender quotas require that political parties nominate 30% women candidates for general elections.
- Passed in 2012 to address gender imbalance in Parliament.
- Quotas apply to parties running at least 30 candidates.
- Parties face financial penalties for not meeting quotas.
- Aims to increase representation of women in politics.
- reasons:**
- The under-representation of women in Irish politics
- Voluntary measures/'soft' targets were tried but failed
- > Party investment on attracting and promoting women in politics was low
- Political reform, democratic renewal, 'New Politics'
- > a desire to break away from the 'old way' of 'doing' politics
- Women's mobilisation and feminist activism in society and parliament
- Levelling the 'political playing pitch'
- Party elite support in government
- impact:**
- 90 per cent increase women candidates
- 48 per cent increase in number of women TDs
- At the 2020 general election, 22.5 per cent women's representation in Dáil Éireann
- > A record high but far away from gender parity

- Legacy of (i) historical exclusion of women from political citizenship (ie suffrage); (ii) bias towards traditional gender roles have resulted in women's under-representation worldwide; and (iii) challenge the gendered nature of political institutions and decision-making	Men are over represented: 26.9% women parliamentarians; 73.1% men parliamentarians - > time to problematise men's overrepresentation rather than normalise women's underrepresentation (Rainbow Murray)
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Not published yet.  
Last updated 26th November, 2024.  
Page 1 of 2.

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