

ISSUES OF GENDER EQUALITY IN ALBANIA: CHALLENGES AND INFLUENCING FACTORS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS OF GENDER QUOTAS IN POLITICS.

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Abstract

In Albania, politics is an area where deep gender differences continue to persist. Despite of the additional legal provisions (in 2008 and changes in 2012), requiring a minimum of 30% of each gender in politics and decision-making, the elections of 2009 and those of 2011 demonstrated significant challenges and problems related to the implementation of the legal provisions. This research explores on the implementation process of gender quotas in politics in Albania, the challenges faced and influential factors helping or inhibiting the process. Available secondary data have been used to map the situation in Albania and compare it to other countries. Whereas, primary data have been collected via qualitative research tools, namely semi-structured interviews, to explore the challenges and factors believed to have influenced the outcomes of gender quotas implementation in Albanian politics. The research population was composed by purposefully selected subjects, representatives of both women and men succeeding to enter or not to the elections lists, and those succeeding or not to become part of the parliament. The study concludes that gender quotas in Albania have created overall a positive impact in women's participation in politics. Among others, the study finds that media and civil society have significantly influenced the implementation of gender quotas in Albanian politics. Lack of political will, gaps in the to-date legal framework and Electoral Code, limited attempts of women's organization as a group, and role overload have been found to be accountable for the so far limited success of gender quotas in politics, in Albania.

Keywords: *gender equality, gender quotas, politics, Albania*