QUOTAS FOR WOMEN ON CORPORATE BOARDS: LESSONS FROM POLITICS

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CORPORATE VERSUS POLITICAL QUOTAS

- ~10 countries
  - Law or firm mandated
  - State-owned, public-limited companies with n+ employees
  - Management boards
  - Proportion usually 40%
  - Mixed numerical effect
  - Requirement, sanction

- 100+ countries
  - Law or party statutes
  - Political parties
  - Candidate lists and/or elected officials
  - Proportion usually 30%
  - Mixed numerical effect
  - Design, institutional context, political will
Diagnosis: women are qualified, but discriminated against → require deliberate intervention

Anticipated effects: increased performance of party/firm and creation of role models

Critiques: selection of unqualified women, decreased performance, and demeaning to women

*Heighten expectations vs. focus on soft diversity
LESSONS FROM POLITICAL QUOTAS

- Numbers $\rightarrow$ resistance to ‘regendering’
- Qualifications $\rightarrow$ recruitment dilemmas
  - Finding women
  - Different paths/backgrounds
- Performance $\rightarrow$ perspectives and outcomes
  - Policy-making approaches
  - Indicators of change
- Role model $\rightarrow$ engagement and ambition
NON-QUOTA STRATEGIES

- Training programs → skills and resources
- Recruitment initiatives → finding candidates
- Public awareness campaigns → rethink stereotypes
- Knowledge networks → share strategies and publicize opportunities
- Work environment → ‘women-friendly’ practices

* More modest, incremental change
* Conscious strategies needed for change to occur