



Female Participation in Politics and Organized Crime Infiltration

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MOTIVATION

This paper focus on the effect of an increasing female participation in politics on organized crime infiltration. Our research question combines two branches of literature:

- ❖ **Gender gap in politics:** reducing women underrepresentation contributes to legitimate democracy, to improve governmental quality and to reduce corruption
- ❖ **Organized crime infiltration:** higher quality of institutions entails a weaker impact of organized crime on politicians

Therefore, women may be a **constraint** for organized crime infiltration in politics

- ❖ Women are the «**fairer sex**»: they should strenghten institutions being less prone to alteration of morality
- ❖ Women are more likely to invest in sectors (education, childcare, etc) which provide **low returns** for organized crime

OUR WORK

- ❖ We perform a panel data analysis over about 1700 Italian Southern municipalities from 1985 to 2013
- ❖ We use the **dissolution** of a municipality for (suspected) mafia infiltration as a **proxy** for **organized crime** infiltration
- ❖ We solve potential endogeneity problem by using, as **instrumental variable**, the **gender quota law** ($GQ_{i,t}$), which creates an exogenous source of variation in the share of women
- ❖ We estimate a **Probit Model with the Control Function Approach**:
Dependent variable: dummy on the municipal dissolutions
Regressor of interest: share of females in municipalities ($W_{i,t}$)

$$W_{i,t} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 GQ_{i,t} + \alpha_2 X_{i,t} + \delta_i + \delta_t + T\delta_r + u_{i,t}$$

$$\Pr(y_{i,t} = 1) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 W_{i,t} + \beta_2 X_{i,t} + \beta_3 Res + \delta_i + \delta_t + T\delta_r + \varepsilon_{i,t}$$

RESULTS

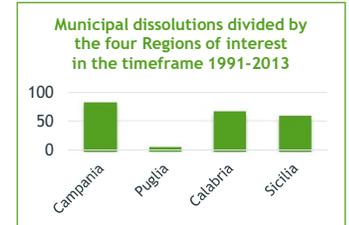
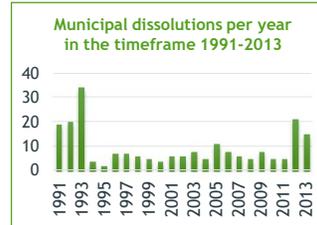
Dep.Var. y	Probit - 2 ^o stage estimation		
Women	-8.72*** (-2.40)	-8.18*** (-3.53)	-8.45*** (-3.54)
Region time trend	No	Yes	Yes
Municipality controls	No	No	Yes
AME	-0.186***	-0.179***	-0.169***
N. obs.	38655	38655	34534

There is a strong evidence that the probability of dissolution for mafia infiltration decreases when there is a larger share of women in the municipal administration!

- ❖ In the **first stage** estimation: the coefficient of $GQ_{i,t}$ is **positive and highly significant**; all the performed tests do not show any sign of a weak instrument problem
- ❖ In the **second stage** estimation the Average Marginal Effect (AME) is **negative and highly significant** everywhere. An increase of 10 percentage points in the share of women in the municipal political body decreases the probability of dissolution of that municipality by 1.69 percentage points.

DATA

- ❖ Law n°164/1991 states that a **municipality is dissolved** «When evidence emerges regarding direct or indirect **links** between members of the local **government** and **criminal** organisations [. . .] jeopardising the free will of the electoral body and the sound functioning of the municipal administration»



- ❖ Law n°81/1993 introduced **gender quota**: it established **fixed threshold** on the number of candidates of an electoral list that could be of the **same sex**
- ❖ In 1995 gender quota law was declared **incostitutional**; therefore it was **only enforced** between March 1993 and September 1995

ROBUSTNESS CHECK

- ❖ We evaluate the impact of an increase in the share of women on **dissolutions unrelated to mafia infiltration** to check if females have a negative effect on all dissolutions (not only on the mafia-related ones)
- ❖ We consider **different definitions of the dependent variable** to take into account that organized crime may have infiltrate the municipality 5/10 years before the dissolutions, or since 1985
- ❖ We perform a **falsification test** to check the **validity** of the instrument by randomising the share of women in two different ways. Running the first stage, gender quota is no longer significant
- ❖ We **restrict the sample** in different ways: by **excluding Puglia** and by narrowing the control group to municipalities in the **neighbourhood** of the dissolved ones (treatment group)
- ❖ We replicate the analysis considering only municipalities with **less than 15000 inhabitants** to check for a slight difference in the law

Results are confirmed!!

CONCLUSION

This paper provides **new and unexplored** evidence of a **negative link** between an increasing female participation in politics and organized crime infiltration in government. It adds a **further reason** in favour of the **reduction of the gender gap** in politics. In fact, it shows that **policies** aimed at legitimizing democracy, such as gender quotas in the electoral law, also have the indirect effect of **strengthening institutions** in the fight against organized crime, which is always a key government agenda.

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