



Minerva - Laboratory on Diversity and Gender Inequality
Sapienza University of Rome

EU Citizenship: A Gender Perspective

Prof. Marcella Corsi



SAPIENZA
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA

Vision of The Gender Equality Strategy

The Strategy has the vision of a Europe where women and men, girls and boys, **in all their diversity**, are **equal** - where they are **free to pursue their chosen path in life**, where they have **equal opportunities to thrive**, and where they can **equally participate in and lead our European society**.

Different types of participation

- *Manifest participation*: gender differences in active engagement in public affairs
- *Latent participation*: gender differences in active engagement in civic and associational life

We must look at the *conditions* supporting active participation and their gendered patterns - orientation to communal and public life and mobility

Active participation

Latent

Social involvement, e.g. taking an interest in politics/society

Civic engagement, e.g. informing oneself about public affairs, activity in community organisations

Manifest

Conventional political participation, e.g. voting, active in party or unions

Extra-parliamentary activism, e.g. signing petitions, involvement in new social movements, participating in demonstrations

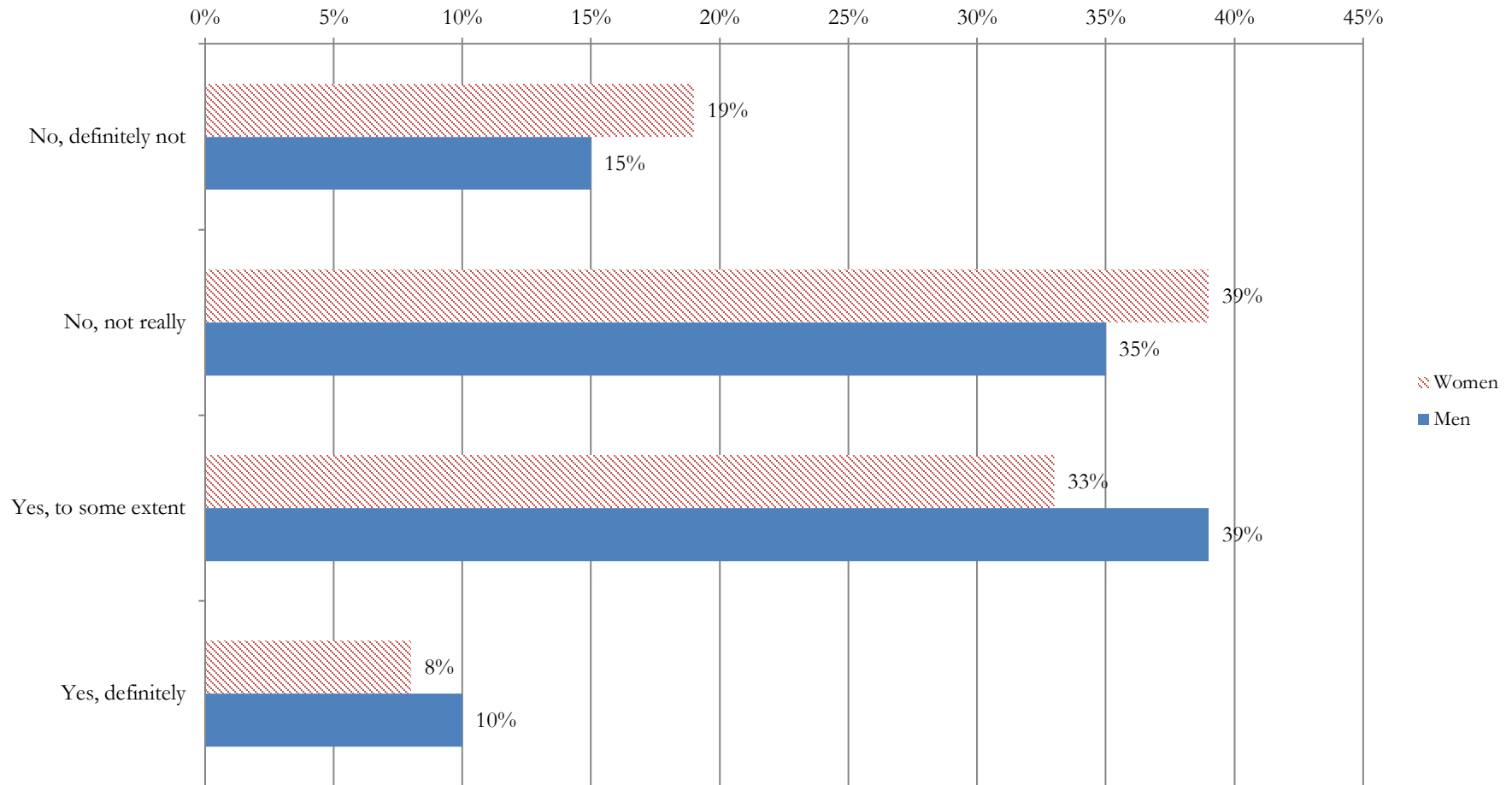
GENDER DIFFERENCES IN POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING

Awareness of Citizenship Rights

- Women feel less informed than men of their rights as EU citizens
- Women feel less informed than men on ways of securing their rights as EU citizens
- Women are less aware than men of their electoral rights

Not knowing the parameters of citizenship creates an obstacle that is greater for women to engage in political affairs.

Knowledge about own rights as EU citizen (% , by sex)



Source: Standard Eurobarometer 78.1.2012; elaborations by DGComm.

Interest in Politics

- Over one half (51.1%) of all men of all ages declare that they have an interest in politics, but just over one-third (37.2%) of women, irrespective of age, do so.

Enhancing women's political knowledge and engaging their interest in political affairs can have a positive effect on their inclination to participate more fully in public matters.

Frequency of political discussion (% , by sex)

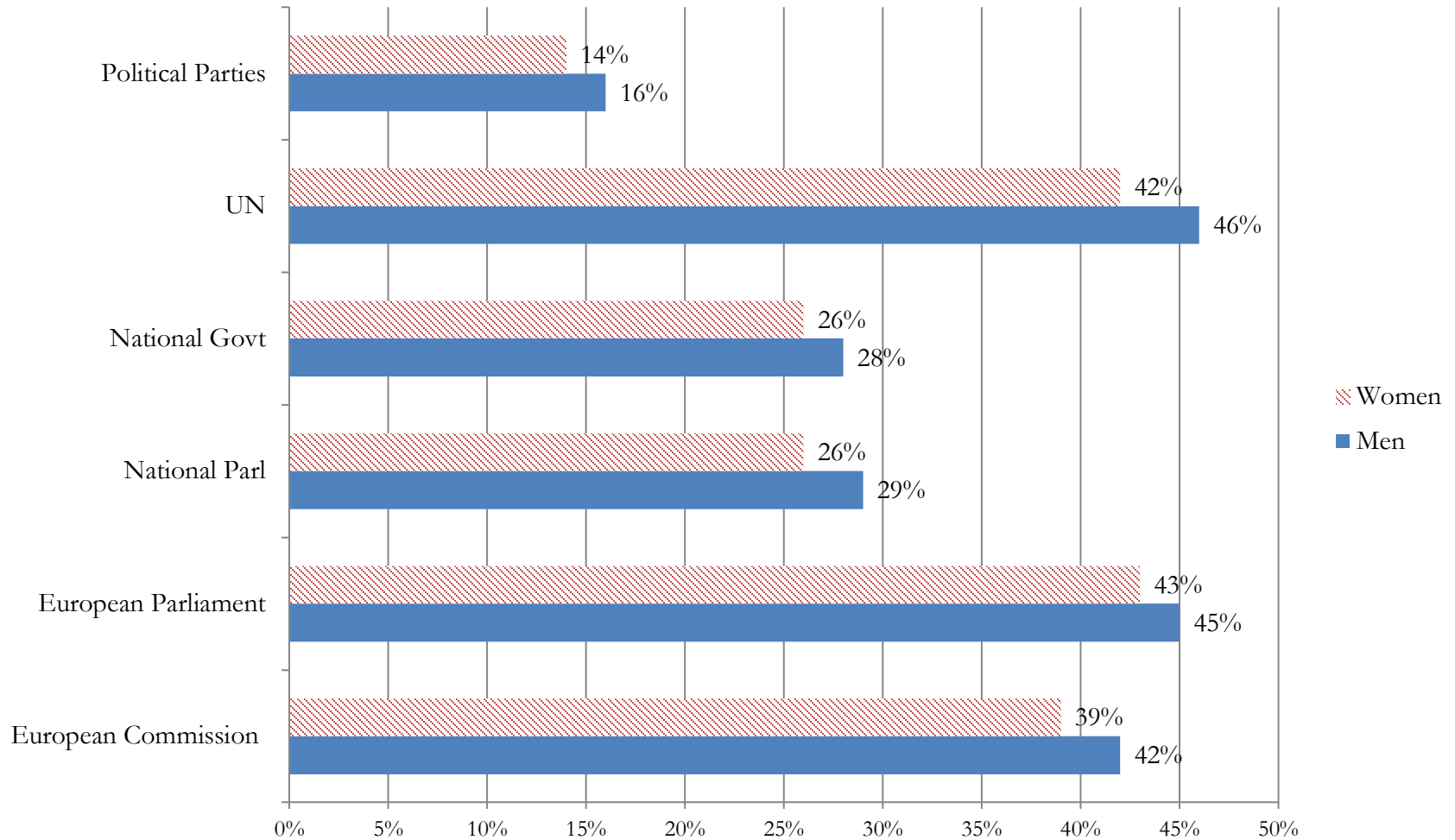
	National matters		European matters		Local matters	
	M	W	M	W	M	W
Frequently	25	18	15	11	25	20
Occasionally	55	54	53	47	52	52
Never	20	28	32	42	23	27
Total 'YES'	80	72	68	58	77	72

Source: Standard Eurobarometer 78.1.2012; elaborations by DGComm.

Trust in Institutions

Women, on average, feel significantly less politically efficacious and have substantially less trust in government and interest in politics than men.

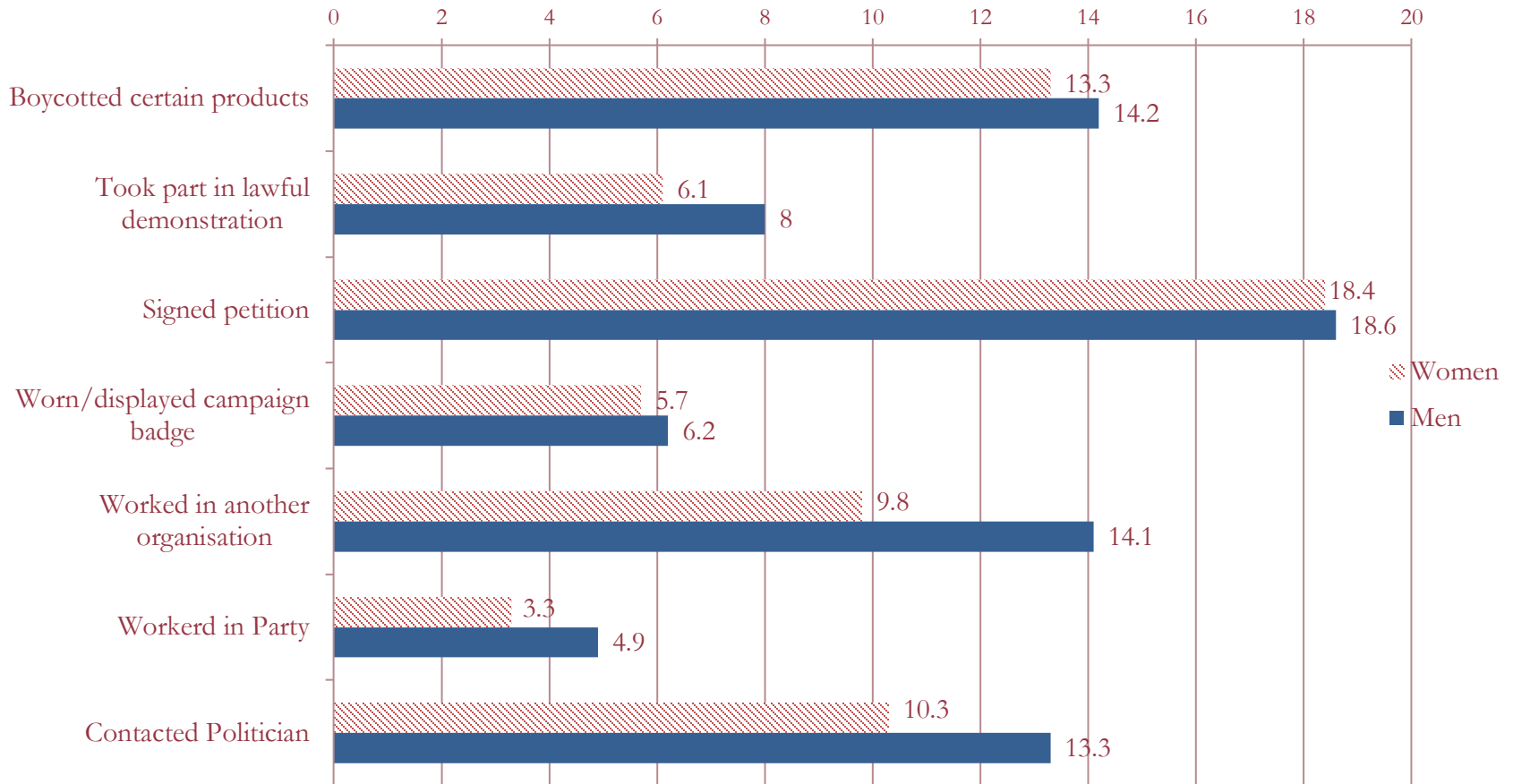
Trust in political institutions (% , by sex)



Political Participation

If women are less politically engaged than men, their substantive representation will be affected as their perspectives and interests will fail to be reflected in political decision-making to the same extent as those of men.

Political participation (% by sex)



Source: European Social Survey 2010

- When it comes to voting, women are somewhat more inclined than men to hold the view that their vote can influence decision-making at all levels, and at European level, the gender gap is 7 percentage points (women 57%, men 50%).

Encouraging women's participation in elections at European elections is a worthwhile endeavour in enhancing women's sense of political efficacy.

The effectiveness of voting (% , by sex)

Elections	Effective		Ineffective		Don't Know	
	M	W	M	W	M	W
European	50	57	47	38	3	5
National	68	71	30	26	2	3
Local/Regional	70	74	28	23	2	3

Source: European Commission (2013b).

Political representation

- Women's political representation - both in the parliaments of EU Member States and in the European Parliament - has more than doubled in the past 30 years.
- In 2013 women held just over one-quarter (26%) of senior cabinet positions in EU Member States governments.

Evolution of women's political representation in the European Union, 1982-2012 (%)

Institution	1982 (EU-10)	1992 (EU-12)	2002 (EU-15)	2012 (EU-27)
National Parliaments (Lower house)	10	14	24	27
European Parliament	17	20	31	35

Source: IPU Women in Parliaments; European Commission Database on Women in Decision Making.

- Significant cross-country variations are evident in the levels of women's parliamentary representation in Europe today . Cultural attitudes can, in some cases, explain cross-country variation in the levels of women's political representation in Europe, but not in others.

Scholars of gender and politics emphasise the important role of institutional factors in structuring women's political participation, and it is in this context that the public debate on gender quotas in decision making, political and economic, has taken place in the European Union and Member States.

Gender Quotas

- **Gender inequality in political life = deficit in the democratic process**
- Debating the use of rules and targets for increasing women's political participation
- *“When women do better, economies do better.”*
- Women in parliament influence public spending decisions to reflect their political priorities: expenditures on public services-especially social welfare, health and education-increase

<https://eige.europa.eu/news/quotas-remedy-gender-inequality-can-bring-big-change-politics-and-business>

Thank you for your attention
marcella.corsi@uniroma1.it

