

Abstract

The main purpose of this text is to answer a question whether quotas in politics create conditions for obtaining equality between the sexes. Women's consistent underrepresentation in legislatures constitutes a democratic deficit and quotas are suggested as a possible means of attaining women's equal participation in political decision-making. Arguments for and against quotas will be showed. Quotas are aligned with several concepts – a politics of presence, descriptive representation and differentiated citizenship. It will be also explained why the unequal distribution of the unpaid labor of the family is a major obstacle for women to gain equality in politics. It will be described what types of quotas are actually applied, what are the effects of gender quotas in terms of numbers as well as the empowerment of women and under what conditions are women politicians able to make use of their positions as elected politicians. Attention will be paid to some years of experience with the implementation of quotas in Africa, whether the inclusion of women in politics furthers democratization and interests of women. South Africa will be showed as a country in which gender quotas are applied with success. In contrast negative effects of quotas in certain political system and context will be pointed out.