

Women's Representation in Southeast European
Politics

NEW HORIZONS IN GENDER AND POLITICS

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Women's Representation in Southeast European Politics

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NEW HORIZONS IN GENDER AND POLITICS SERIES

 **Edward Elgar**
PUBLISHING

Cheltenham, UK • Northampton, MA, USA

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Published by

Edward Elgar Publishing Limited
The Lypiatts
15 Lansdown Road
Cheltenham
Glos GL50 2JA
UK

Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.
William Pratt House
9 Dewey Court
Northampton
Massachusetts 01060
USA

Authorised representative in the EU for GPSR queries only: Easy Access System
Europe – Mustamäe tee 50, 10621 Tallinn, Estonia, gpsr.requests@easproject.com

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Control Number:

This book is available electronically in the  Elgaronline
Political Science and Public Policy subject collection
<https://doi.org/10.4337/9781035350551>

ISBN 978 1 0353 5054 4 (cased)
ISBN 978 1 0353 5055 1 (eBook)
ISBN 978 1 0494 0763 0 (ePub)

The book is dedicated to all women across Southeast Europe whose political experiences, advocacy, and democratic ideals challenge entrenched inequalities and continue to shape the development of institutions and gender equality mechanisms in post-socialist and post-conflict societies.

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Acknowledgements

We express our profound gratitude to Alex Pettifer, Jo Humphreys, Nina Booth, and Emma McInnes from Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd and to the editors of the New Horizons in Gender and Politics Series, Professor Emerita Drude Dahlerup and Professor Birgit Sauer, for their prompt, unreserved, and enthusiastic acceptance of our proposal to publish this volume. We extend our appreciation for their expert guidance, constructive feedback, and well-intentioned critical insights.

We would also like to express our appreciation to our distinguished colleagues from the Gender and Politics in Southeast Europe Research Network (GenPolSEE), which was founded in 2022 through the joint efforts of the Institute for Social Sciences and the Institute for Philosophy and Social Theory at the University of Belgrade. Notably, the GenPolSEE network is the only interdisciplinary and systematic network in this region focusing on issues related to gender and politics. We would especially like to thank our colleague Saša Gavrić, who encouraged the idea of publishing this book, which we hope will attract the attention of the wider professional and academic community.

We are deeply grateful to all the authors, whose valuable discussions and suggestions during the research and the exchange of ideas at the network's annual meeting in 2024 significantly improved the quality of this volume. The positive atmosphere, dedication, mutual cooperation, respect, and understanding fostered an exciting journey that will be remembered for years to come.

We also thank our families for their tireless support, understanding, and encouragement throughout the process of writing and editing this book.

The editors

PART I

Introduction

Mapping women's political representation in Southeast Europe: Legacies, reforms and struggles

Marsela Dauti, Milica Antić Gaber and Lilijana Čičkarić

Over the past decades, women have made important strides in politics across the world. Southeast European (SEE) countries are no exception. These countries experienced a dramatic decline in women's political participation during the early post-socialist years, followed by important institutional reforms aimed at promoting gender equality in politics (Dahlerup & Antić Gaber, 2017; Hassenstab & Ramet, 2015). These efforts, driven by domestic activism, international norms, and European integration processes, have resulted in notable progress, at least in numerical terms. In many countries in the region, the share of women in national and subnational parliaments has increased substantially, signalling a shift in public discourse and formal political commitments to gender equality.

Yet, as women's visible presence in elected office has grown, new and pressing questions have emerged. What does the increased numerical presence mean for political representation in practice? What happens after women are elected; how do they participate in decision-making, and to what extent do they influence policy agendas? After years of gender equality reforms, what obstacles do women still face in politics? This volume seeks to explore these questions by examining not only the presence of women in politics, but also their roles, actions, experiences, and impacts. Specifically, it considers how women contribute to political processes through parliamentary activities, cross-party collaboration, advocacy on behalf of their constituents, and engagement with gender equality legislation. In doing so, the volume moves beyond descriptive representation to examine the substance and significance of women's representation in politics across SEE.

The idea for this book emerged from one of the early meetings of the Gender and Politics Research Network in Southeast Europe (GenPolSEE).

The network, established in 2022, brings together researchers, educators, and practitioners focused on gender and politics in the region. Given the scarcity of in-depth, comparative scholarship on women's political representation in SEE, the proposal for a special volume was received with enthusiasm. Network members contributed their most recent research on timely and pressing issues concerning women's political representation and, more broadly, the implementation of gender equality reforms across Southeast Europe, including Kosovo, Serbia, Slovenia, Montenegro, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Croatia. The volume reflects their shared commitment to not only researching but also influencing the advancement of gender equality in SEE and it builds on their long-term expertise and feminist standpoint.

HISTORICAL LEGACIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON CONTEMPORARY GENDER REPRESENTATION

SEE countries share overlapping ideological, cultural, and geopolitical legacies that continue to shape their political cultures, national identities, and gender dynamics. These states are historically rooted in diverse influences, most notably those of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian Empires, each of which left a lasting imprint on political institutions, cultural norms, and societal roles, especially concerning the status of women in society, their appearance in public, and their engagements in political issues (Corrin, 1992; Ramet, 1999; Ramet, 2010; Daskalova & Zimmermann, 2015).

The Yugoslav period marked a distinct era of supranational integration under various forms of centralized governance during Tito's leadership, culminating in the adoption of a socialist model known as "self-management." While Yugoslav socialism emphasized interethnic unity and social equality, it also enforced one-party rule and a planned economy. During this period, women were granted some important legal rights, what has been described as "emancipation from above," which indeed hindered their own activation in the transformation process (Duhaček, 1993; Papić, 1992). These rights included, for example, equal access to education, full employment rights with equal pay, right on abortion, fully subsidized maternity leave, and special provisions for single mothers, rights that supported women's social inclusion but left political representation limited (Jalušič, 1999). In contrast, Albania followed a more isolated path under the authoritarian rule of Enver Hoxha, marked by extreme centralization, forced secularism, and political repression (Biberaj, 1990). While its foreign policy and economic model diverged from Yugoslavia's more decentralized and internationally engaged approach, the differences were less pronounced when it comes to gender and political representation. Like Yugoslavia, Albania promoted women's social inclusion through state-driven policies, including access to education, employment, and reproductive rights

(Çuli, 2000). However, in both contexts, women remained largely excluded from higher levels of political decision-making.

The ethno-religious diversity of SEE, shaped by the historical presence of Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism, and Islam, continues to be a defining characteristic of the region, contributing to its cultural richness as well as its political complexity. The political influence of religious institutions has varied markedly across national contexts, particularly during the transformative period of the late 1980s and 1990s, when movements for democracy and national independence gained momentum. During this era, religious actors played a significant role in shaping public discourse on women's rights, including political participation (Nacevska, 2018). The broader process of societal re-traditionalization and re-patriarchalization has been notably reinforced by religious interpretations of gender roles and the position of women in society (Jogan, 2014).

As the socialist era drew to a close, women across SEE had experienced varying degrees of progress, particularly in education, employment, and family-related policies. Political institutions were formally committed to equality, but women's roles were often symbolic or marginal. The gains of socialist-era gender reforms were highly dependent on the socialist-state legislation. As such, the fall of socialism in the early 1990s found women with limited political power, and the transition to democracy would pose new challenges to their political participation (Corrin, 1992; Duhaček, 1993; Jalušič, 1999).

POLITICAL PLURALIZATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR GENDER REPRESENTATION

Following the collapse of socialist regimes, all states in SEE underwent processes of political pluralization, the establishment of new democratic institutions, and market liberalization. Nevertheless, the pace and the effects of these processes mostly depended on the political culture in the country, whether this tended to be modernizing (as it was the case in Slovenia) or traditional one (like in Albania) (Cabada, 2009). These transitions were frequently accompanied by political instability, economic downturns, and institutional fragility. The dissolution of Yugoslavia was accompanied by violent conflicts, ranging from the 10-day war in Slovenia to prolonged wars, most notably in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Kosovo, resulting in extensive loss of life, displacement, and war crimes (Musliu & Mujika Chao, 2024). In Bosnia and Herzegovina, for instance, the gender-blind nature of the Dayton Peace Agreement has reinforced women's exclusion from post-conflict political reconstruction, especially at the cantonal level (Mlinarević & Porobić Isaković, 2015; Deiana, 2016; Mujić, 2019; Kapić, 2022). Albania, although not part of Yugoslavia, was nonetheless affected by the broader regional transformations.

The developments of the late twentieth century have profoundly shaped the political and social structures of SEE in the twenty-first century (Apor & Newman, 2021).

Analyses of political culture in SEE have highlighted a persistent tension between democratic aspirations and authoritarian tendencies. Draško et al. (2019) argue that the larger part of the region's political culture is shaped by clientelism, authoritarian tendencies, populism, and ethno-nationalism. Rooted in parochial and patriarchal norms dating back to the early twentieth century, this culture evolved under socialist regimes, where limited emancipatory developments occurred within the framework of self-management, and was further shaped by post-socialist elites' failure to institutionalize democratic norms and dismantle entrenched systems of state capture. Countries in SEE tend to prioritize survival values, placing greater emphasis on the collective over individual autonomy (Draško et al., 2019). This tendency is most pronounced in Albania and least evident in Croatia, while Slovenia stands out as an exception, ranking significantly higher than other SEE countries on the map of secular and self-expression values (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Slovenia's transition stood apart from other SEE countries due to its unique position in the former Yugoslavia and its different path in socialism. Its national homogeneity contributed to a relatively peaceful move toward independence and the formation of democratic institutions. Notably, Slovenia established the region's first Office of Women's Politics in 1992 (Jalušič & Antić Gaber, 2001). As the most economically developed Yugoslav republic, with strong Western ties, high women's employment, and relatively open borders since the 1960s, Slovenia entered the post-socialist era under more favourable conditions than its SEE neighbours (Toš & Bernik, 2002).

Women's political representation in SEE has been shaped by the efforts of domestic and international actors. All countries in the region have, at some point, expressed aspirations to join the European Union. Slovenia (2004) and Croatia (2013) have achieved full membership, while others remain at various stages of candidacy or pre-accession negotiations. Throughout this process, the EU has played a significant role in promoting gender equality, particularly by encouraging reforms aimed at increasing women's political participation and representation. Compliance with EU gender mainstreaming standards and alignment with accession criteria have prompted many SEE countries to strengthen institutional mechanisms and implement policies to advance women's roles in political life (Rashkova & Zankina, 2021; Vojvodić, 2021).

Among the most effective reforms supported by both international and domestic actors has been the introduction of electoral gender quotas. Numerous national studies confirm that gender quotas have had a positive impact on the number of women elected to political office (Dauti, 2020, 2021, 2022; Čičkarić, 2023; Antić Gaber & Selišnik, 2023; Šinko, 2023). All SEE countries included

in this volume have adopted gender quotas, and most have achieved significant levels of women's representation in national parliaments.

In local councils, women's representation is generally consistent with national trends, though some countries, such as Albania, with 42 percent, show even higher levels of participation at the local level (Dauti, this volume). Bosnia and Herzegovina records the lowest share, with only 20 percent of local council seats held by women (International IDEA, 2025; UN Women, 2025). While gender quotas have had a broad positive impact across the region, their effectiveness remains uneven, with structural and contextual factors influencing outcomes across countries and levels of governance.

However, there is growing concern that these numerical gains often mask deeper problems (Dauti & Metaj, 2024; Lončar, 2024). Political elites frequently instrumentalize gender quotas to bolster regime legitimacy rather than to advance women's meaningful participation in politics, a concern echoed in other contexts as well (Sauer, 2024; Arat, 2021; Bush & Zetterberg, 2021; Bjarnegård & Zetterberg, 2022; Tripp, 2024; Valdini, 2019). Evidence from the region shows that strategic candidate placement, kinship-based selections, and weak enforcement of quota sanctions have all undermined the impact of gender quotas (Dauti & Metaj, 2024; Korunovska et al., 2015; Nacevska & Lokar, 2017).

Local actors across SEE have played an important role in advancing women's political representation. Women's rights organizations, feminist groups, coalitions, women's sections and forums in the parties, caucuses, and alliances have been the driving force behind legal reforms and institutional transformations (Antić Gaber & Selišnik, 2012; Čičkarić, 2020; Kadribašić et al., 2020). They have advocated for the adoption and enforcement of gender quotas, engaged in voter education initiatives, and supported women candidates through training, mentorship, and coalition-building. They have also acted as watchdogs, monitoring political parties' compliance with gender equality commitments and publicly challenging the symbolic inclusion of women in politics. Local actors, often with the support of international development organizations, have pushed for institutional mechanisms that promote substantive representation, such as women's caucuses and gender mainstreaming within policy-making processes (Pajvančić, 2020).

Yet, local actors are encountering significant backlash. Gender equality reforms are often undermined by deeply entrenched masculine domination within political institutions and party hierarchies resistant to change (Šinko, 2023). Moreover, efforts to advance gender equality are often considered secondary to other policy issues, fuelling a broader societal backlash that questions the role of women in politics. Despite these challenges, this volume will underscore that local actors continue to contest exclusionary practices,

although their work remains precarious and often under-supported, particularly in polarized or ethnically fragmented contexts.

INSTITUTIONAL, CULTURAL, AND STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUALITY IN POLITICS

Political parties play an important, but often ambivalent, role in shaping women's political representation across SEE. On the one hand, they serve as gatekeepers to elected office, and in many cases, their adoption of gender quotas, whether mandated by law or voluntarily implemented, has significantly increased the number of women in national and subnational politics. In many cases, parties adopt quotas but then act strategically to undermine their implementation; for example, by placing women in unelectable positions or sidelining them from decision-making roles within party structures (Đukanović & Orlandić, this volume; Nacevcka & Lokar, 2017). Women's sections and forums within parties, where they exist, frequently lack power or are instrumentalized for party interests. Moreover, party cultures across the region remain male-dominated, informal, and hierarchical, making it difficult for women to access and exert influence over policy agendas (Čičkarić, 2016). Evidence shows that even when women gain seats, their representation is often constrained by party discipline, limited autonomy, and gendered expectations (Antić Gaber, 2000; Čičkarić, 2020; Šinko, 2023), though this volume reveals that this is slowly changing. While some contexts have seen more progressive engagement with gender equality, the prevailing picture across the region is one of slow progress where political parties remain both a platform and a barrier to women's full and equal participation in politics.

Despite notable gains in the numerical representation of women in politics across SEE, persistent barriers continue to undermine women's representation. Deeply entrenched patriarchal norms, gender stereotypes, and masculinized political cultures shape political institutions and public perceptions, often framing politics as an inherently male domain (Korunovska et al., 2015; Mitrevska & Maleski, 2023; Radičević, 2022). Political parties, while formally committed to inclusion, frequently operate as gendered gatekeepers through opaque nomination procedures and informal networks that sideline women from leadership roles (Antić Gaber, 2000; Čičkarić, 2016). Even in contexts where quotas have succeeded in boosting the number of women elected, their impact on agenda-setting and policy influence remains weak (Jovevska Gjorgjevikj & Janeska, 2020). Limited institutional support and exclusionary party practices continue to constrain women's political ambition, particularly among younger generations, who often view politics as unwelcoming or morally compromised (Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2021; Antić

Gaber et al., 2014). These structural obstacles continue to undermine the transformative potential of women's political representation.

GAPS IN THE LITERATURE ON GENDER AND POLITICS

This volume is grounded in the premise that, while women's numerical representation in the region has increased, there remains limited knowledge about the work they perform in politics at the national, regional, and local levels. There is a lack of in-depth and comparative research on these topics. This monograph provides an in-depth examination of women's political representation in SEE countries. Specifically, it focuses on the post-election trajectory of women in representative bodies at national and sub-national bodies, emphasizing the substantive aspects of women's political representation. The volume sheds light on the impact of the rise in women's political representation on decision-making processes and policy preferences, while also exploring how gendered interests emerge during representative claim-making.

The extant literature on women's political representation in SEE countries focuses on women's presence in representative institutions, exploring various institutional mechanisms, such as gender quotas and guaranteed seats. A substantial body of research has concentrated on the increasing presence of women's representation in national-level institutions (Antić Gaber & Selišnik, 2012; Brnović, 2016; Čičkarić, 2016, 2020; Dahlerup & Antić Gaber, 2017; Kotevska, 2021; Komar & Živković, 2022; Gavrić, 2023; Lončar, 2023; Popov-Momčinović, 2023). Meanwhile, scholarship on women's representation in sub-national parliaments remains scarce. Existing studies have examined women's trajectories toward local political engagement (Korunovska et al., 2015), as well as the dynamics of gender-based disparities in the quality of government in local councils (Dauti, 2022). Furthermore, there is a lack of longitudinal studies that track women's political engagement over time, including the policy initiatives that women pursue on behalf of their constituents.

The impact of women's political inclusion remains a relatively unexplored field of study (Lončar, 2023). Despite the extensive literature on gender quotas and women's descriptive representation in SEE countries, research on gender-sensitive parliaments remains limited (Kotevska, 2021; Gavrić, 2020). In particular, there is a paucity of research examining the extent to which these institutions accommodate or perpetuate gendered power dynamics. Moreover, little attention has been directed toward the internal work of parliament, encompassing leadership roles, committee assignments, cross-party women's cooperation, gender-sensitive legislation, and the development of an institutional culture from a gender perspective. Addressing these gaps requires a shift from focusing on numerical data to examining the gendered nature of political institutions themselves.

Evidence shows that patriarchal culture, party control, resistance to women's inclusion, and closed doors to high-ranking party positions have had a deleterious effect on women's political representation (Leinert Novosel, 2007; Čičkarić, 2016; Subotić, 2023; Litchfield et al., 2024). Political parties, crucial actors in the recruitment, selection and nomination of candidates, have received little attention in the existing literature. A significant gap remains in the examination of the impact of political parties, the evolution of their agendas, and their internal dynamics (Mitrevska & Maleski, 2023).

This book aims to address some of these critical gaps in the existing scholarship and advance the understanding of gender equality reforms in the SEE region. Apart from that, the authors' intention is to offer a nuanced perspective that take into consideration the social, political, and cultural factors, which differ in the region. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding equality politics and the consequences of the increased presence and representation of women in politics. One of the key objectives of this book is to highlight the importance of women's political representation from a feminist perspective, at the intersection of political science, law, sociology, and social policy. In assembling this volume, the editors sought to include a diverse range of contributors, encompassing both established scholars and emerging researchers from the region at various stages of their academic trajectories. In addition to academic voices, the volume incorporates the insights of practitioners engaged in the study of women's political representation and in policy development, often in collaboration with local and international actors. The inclusion of these perspectives is particularly significant, as they offer grounded, bottom-up analyses that enrich the scholarly discourse on the subject.

THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Given the monograph's potential to make a significant contribution to feminist analyses of women's political representation in SEE, its conceptual framework is predicated on the definition of women's political representation as a multifaceted process that encompasses the negotiation of women's identities, interests, ideas, values, perspectives, and experiences within political institutions. The representation in question comprises symbolic arguments, aspirations, and legitimacy to be involved in political decision-making. The study explores the interaction of three distinct types of political representation: descriptive, substantive, and symbolic (Pitkin, 1967; Phillips, 1995). Descriptive representation refers to the extent to which women representatives resemble the population they represent. Substantive focuses on what representatives do, in advocating for the interests of women. The symbolic concerns the meaning

and message conveyed by women representatives in visible political roles and practices.

The focus is on analysing the position of women in politics given that their identity encompasses two essential aspects: how they are represented and what they stand for (Childs, 2006; Celis, 2009). At the national and local levels, women representatives play a triple role in this complex process. They act on behalf of the electorate that voted them in, represent the political parties that nominated them, and advocate for women's interests. Efforts to improve political representation commonly focus on system-related barriers, candidate selection methods, and electoral gender quotas aimed at ensuring women constitute at least 30 or 40 percent of the candidacies. All SEE countries employ one or more types of quota regulation: legislative candidate quotas, reserved seats quotas, and/or voluntary party quotas. Their effectiveness depends largely on the type of electoral system and party organizational structure, the way they are incorporated in the laws, and consequences of non-compliance with the law (Matland & Montgomery, 2003; Dahlerup, 2006, 2007; Krook, 2009; Lang, Meier & Sauer, 2023).

In this volume, the authors explore these dimensions to offer comparative and country-specific insights into how systemic political structures, electoral systems, party dynamics, and the influence of civil society mobilization on the trajectory of women's political representation differ. The book provides a critical foundation for understanding where progress has been made and where significant barriers to women's presence and representation remain. The chapters focus on three sets of factors that hinder women's full and effective participation and representation in politics: cultural – androcentric legacies of political cultures and prevailing gender regimes that shape societal expectations and norms; political – inhibition of women's pathways after recruitment, such as access to powerful male networks, inner-party positions, and other alliances of actors; and institutional – disparities between rules and regulations, such as quotas, and their implementation and enforcement in practice.

The contributors' research is grounded in country-specific information, cross-party collaboration, advocacy for constituents, and the impact of gender equality laws and legislation. They approach the investigation of women's political representation using a shared conceptual framework that encompasses both qualitative and quantitative research methods. These methods include content analysis of official documents, discourse analysis of parliamentary speeches, analysis of internal party documents, interviews, public opinion surveys and analysis of secondary data. Two of the authors take a comparative approach to examine gender-sensitive parliaments in SEE, providing an in-depth analysis of gender equality reforms in politics.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK AND CHAPTER OVERVIEW

The first section, “Women’s Representation in National Parliaments: Actors, Actions, and Outcomes”, comprises four highly informative and analytical chapters that offer insights into the dynamics of representation in national parliaments from a women’s perspective. In the chapter “Between Politics of Ideas and Politics of Presence: Women in Parliamentary Democracy in Kosovo”, Vjollca Krasniqi and Lirije Palushi analyse the dynamics of women’s representation in parliament since Kosovo declared independence in 2008. Employing a mixed methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative data, they explore how the increased presence of women in Kosovo politics affects decision-making and policy preferences. In the chapter “Insiders or Outsiders: The Women’s Parliamentary Network in Serbia”, Lilijana Čičkarić explores the network’s functioning, mechanisms, and ways of operation. Her qualitative research is based on interviews with women MPs, offering insights into their perspectives on motivation, perceptions, and the challenges of promoting gender equality in parliamentary life. In the chapter “Gendered Power Structures and Women’s Lived Experiences in the Slovenian Parliament”, Jure Skubic and Milica Antić Gaber examine the representation of women in the Slovenian Parliament. The first part of the text examines the progress and setbacks of women’s political representation over the years and highlights the importance of gender quotas in Slovenian politics. The second part of the chapter, based on the interviews with women MPs, reveals experiences of exclusion, discrimination, and gender-based violence. In the study “Women’s Political Representation in Montenegro: From Reform to Inequality”, Nikoleta Djukanović and Milica Kovač Orlandić examine the challenges hindering women’s political participation. They focus on the electoral system, political parties, socioeconomic factors, and patriarchal culture. Montenegro stands among the countries with the lowest percentage of women in national parliaments in the SEE region. Their analysis spans both central and local levels of government and uses mixed data analysis to identify factors that impede women’s representation in politics.

The section “Challenges of Women’s Representation in Local Parliaments” offers three unique insights into the gendered aspects of representation in local parliaments, with a particular focus on women’s policy and advocacy initiatives. In the chapter “Breaking Barriers: Women’s Policy and Advocacy Initiatives in the Local Councils of Albania”, Marsela Dauti discusses how women representatives advocate for their constituents, the extent to which their policy and advocacy initiatives challenge executive powers, and the transformative changes women representatives seek to achieve. In the chapter “The Political Representation of Women in Cantons of the Federation of

Bosnia and Herzegovina”, Tajma Kapić examines this tension by focusing on women’s representation at the cantonal level. The study examines changes to the Election Law and their impact on women’s representation, focusing on the extent to which elected women advocate for women’s interests. Tania Ivanova’s chapter, “Political Participation of Women in North Macedonia: Going Beyond Parity”, extends beyond the scope of quotas to delve into the substantive aspect of women’s political participation at the local level. Currently, women hold 42.5 percent of parliamentary seats and 35 percent of positions in local bodies. Nevertheless, she identifies barriers that impede women’s meaningful representation.

The third section, “Political Parties and Social Media Through the Lens of Gender Equality”, contains two cases that address the representation of women in political parties and the strategy of political communication on social media. In the chapter “Gender (In)equality in Croatian Parliamentary Parties’ Statutes”, Marjeta Šinko traces the progress made by political parties, from nearly no presence to achieving 34 percent representation in the most recent parliamentary session. The analysis focuses on major Croatian political parties and compares their statutes before and after 2008, the year the Act on Gender Equality was enacted. Zlatiborka Popov Momčinović and Vuk Vučetić address a significant gap in existing research on women representatives in their chapter “Political (Self-)representation of Women MPs on Facebook: What Comes First in Republika Srpska’s *Srpska First?*”. They shift the focus from mere descriptive representation to a nuanced exploration of women’s participation and provide an in-depth analysis of women MPs’ social media activities.

The final section, “Intersectional and Cross-National Perspectives”, contains a critical review of gender equality reforms in several SEE countries, as well as a comparative analysis of women’s representation in the region’s national parliaments. In the chapter “Looking from the Outside In: An Intersectional Perspective on Political Participation in SEE Countries Through the Prism of the CEDAW Committee”, Biljana Kotevska critically examines gender equality reforms regarding political participation through the lens of the CEDAW Committee and an intersectional perspective. The study contributes to our understanding of how SEE countries appropriate gender equality reforms and interact with the international level. In the chapter “Looking Beyond Numbers: How Gender-Sensitive Are Parliaments in Southeast Europe?”, Amila Ždralović seeks to fill a gap in the field by providing a distinctive contribution to the concepts and theories of gender-sensitive parliaments and feminist institutionalism.

This book will appeal to scholars, researchers, and students in the fields of gender and politics, public policy, and international development, offering critical insights into women’s political participation and the structural reforms needed to achieve gender equality in politics. The volume also provides

valuable information and analyses for policymakers, government officials, and institutional reformers seeking to design and implement effective gender equality policies within political systems and public institutions, not only in SEE countries but more broadly. And finally, it serves as a vital resource for women's rights advocates, civil society actors, and international organizations working to promote gender-inclusive political decision-making and to advance systemic reforms that support women's political empowerment.

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