

Women, Finance and the Left

"Gender Relations in a Hegemonic Left Project"

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"Gender Relations in a Hegemonic Left Project"

1. Effects of the financial crisis and the financial system and policy on women
2. Election results and engagement of women in parties and the social movement
 - a) Election results in Germany and Austria
 - b) Engagement of women in Attac Germany and Austria
3. Hypotheses: Why do women engage less in "the left"? How could women be better involved?

1. Effects of the financial crisis and the financial system and policy on women

Effects of the Asian crisis on woman

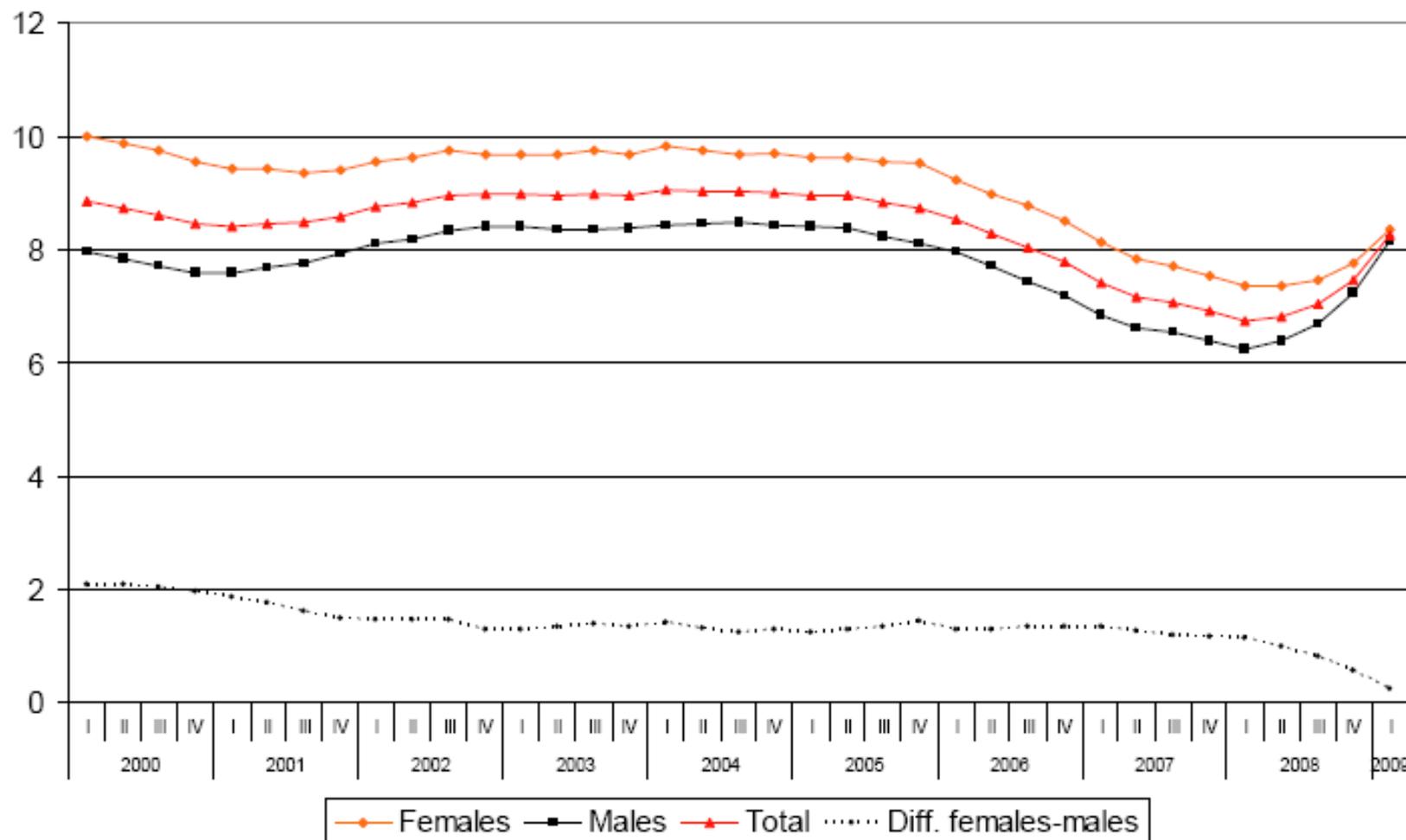
- salaries of women fell more than men's salaries;
- girls were taken out of school;
- more poverty, prostitution and more domestic violence;
- women were more easily licenced because men are seen as those who care for the family.

→ women were concerned to a bigger extend than men

1. Effects of the financial crisis and the financial system and policy on women

Men affected more than women, rates converged in EU27

Figure 3: Unemployment rates (%) in the EU27 by gender, seasonally adjusted



1. Effects of the financial crisis and the financial system and policy on women

Assumption: Men are more effected by the crisis than women:

- Job loss is higher areas in which men are employed (construction, financial sector, automotive industry).



1. Effects of the financial crisis and the financial system and policy on women

Assumption: Woman are as much or more effected by the crisis than men

- Women will lose jobs in the second phase of the crisis once care and service jobs will be downsized due to cuts in public budget;
- economic stimulus packages favor men's jobs (building, automotive industry);
- women do not appear in disemployment statistics because they do trainings or part time jobs even if they would prefer to work fulltime;
- effects of the crisis in the area of informal work are not captured;
- women have less savings because they are less paid;
- women are more concerned by shortcuts in public domain (education and health);
- in recession, reproductive work becomes harder.

1. Effects of the financial crisis and the financial system and policy on women

Besides the crisis the economic system disadvantages women:

Gender income gap: average of 17,4 % in Europe (Eurostat 2007)

Among 1011 Billionaires on the Forbes list there are only 89 women (ftd).

Women get 10 % of worldwide income, but do approx. 70% of unpaid work (UNDP 1995).

Women own 1 % of global estate and 0,98 % of global wealth (UNDP 1995).

Tax policy favors wealth, high income and mobile capital, mostly hold by men.

Tax havens are often used by men to cheat their divorced women and children.

2. Election results and engagement of women in parties and the social movement

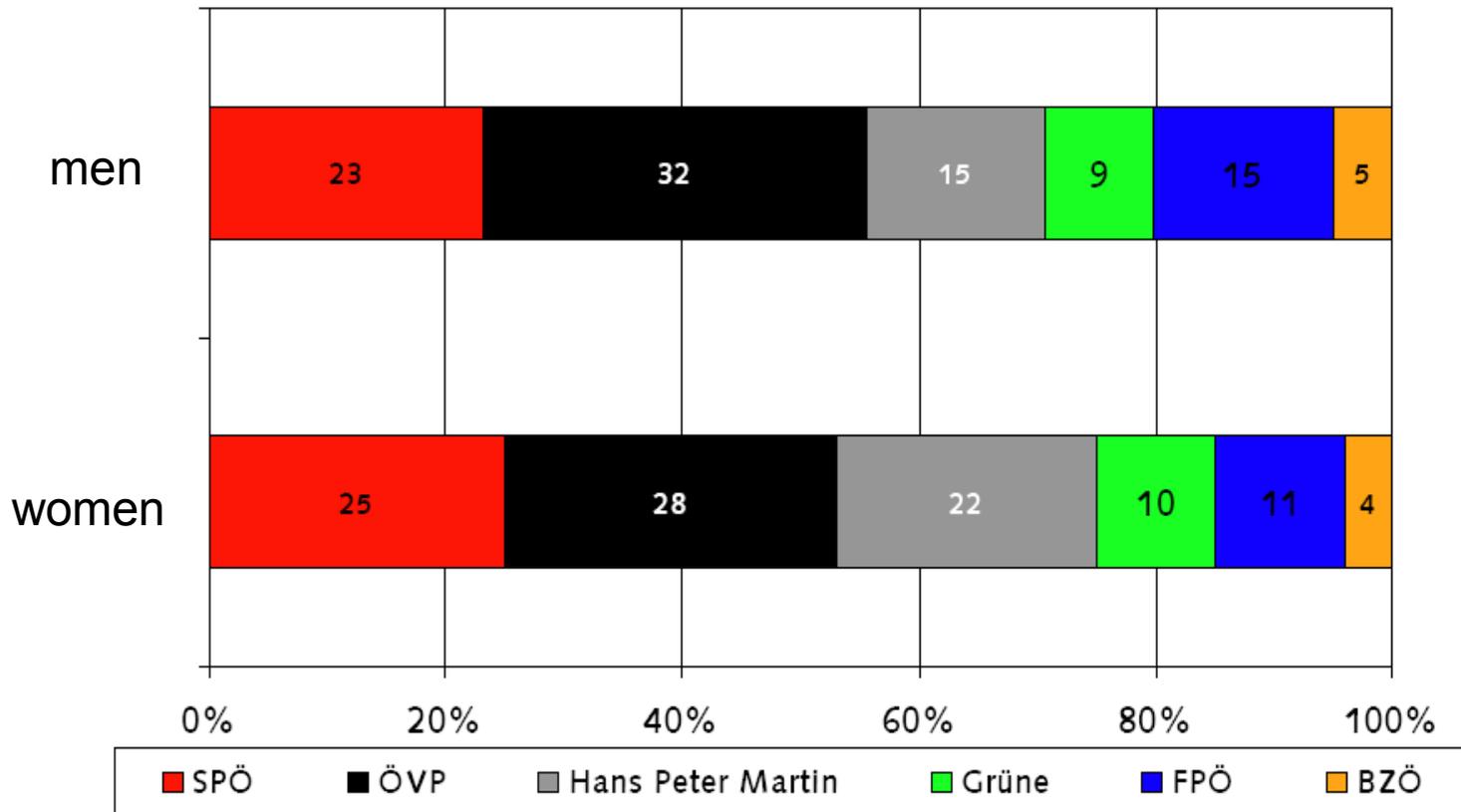
→ It might be expected that women vote for parties or engage in movement which intend to change the economic system.

Which parties do women vote for? Do they engage in Attac to change the economic and financial system?

- a) Election results in Germany and Austria by sex
- b) Case studies: engagement and support of women in Attac Germany and Austria

2a. Election results: Which party do women elect?

Austria: Gender gap in the European elections 2008



More women's votes:

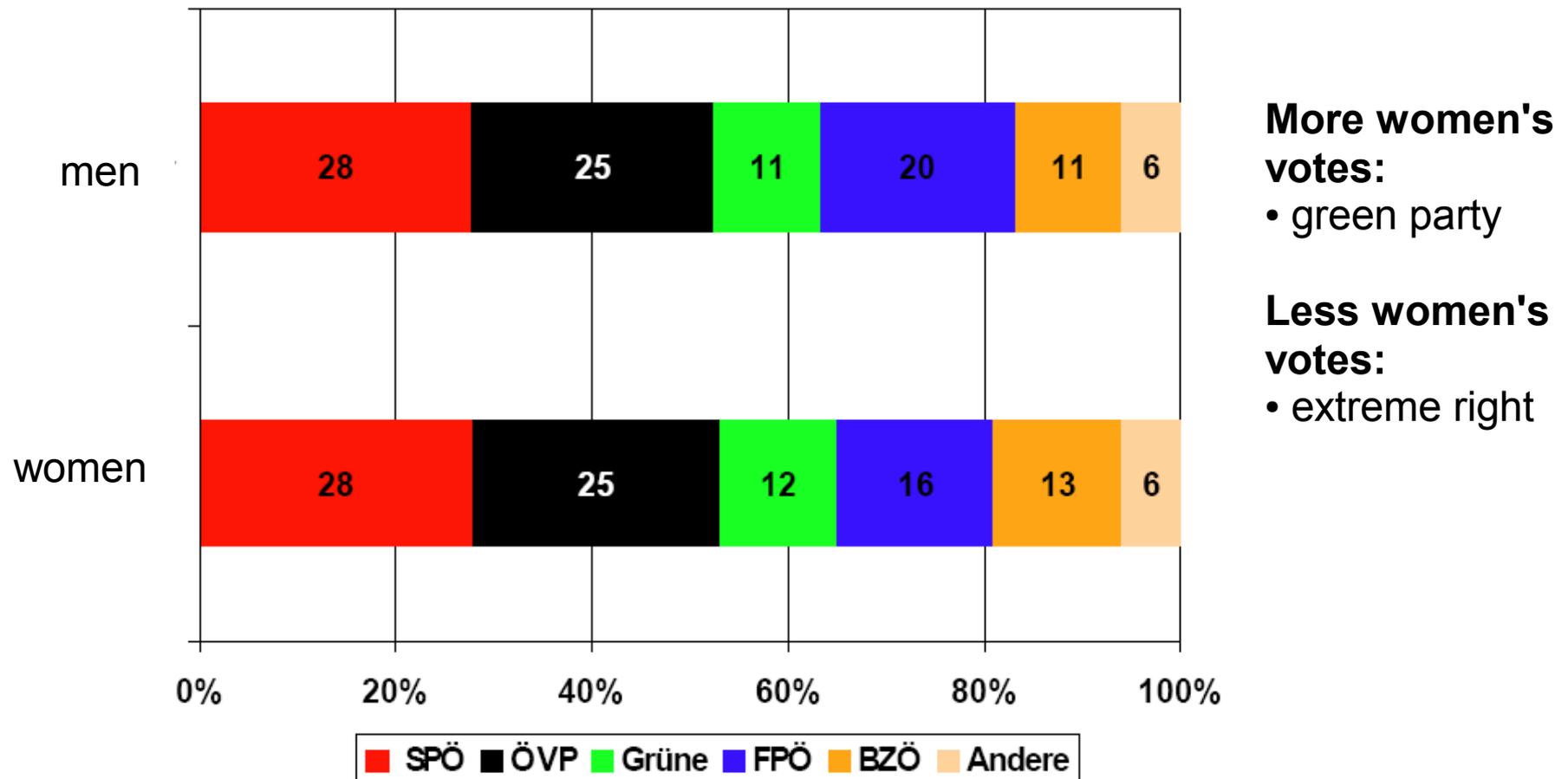
- social democrats (centre left)
- the candidate without party (centre left)
- green party

Less women's votes:

- people's party (conservative)
- extreme right

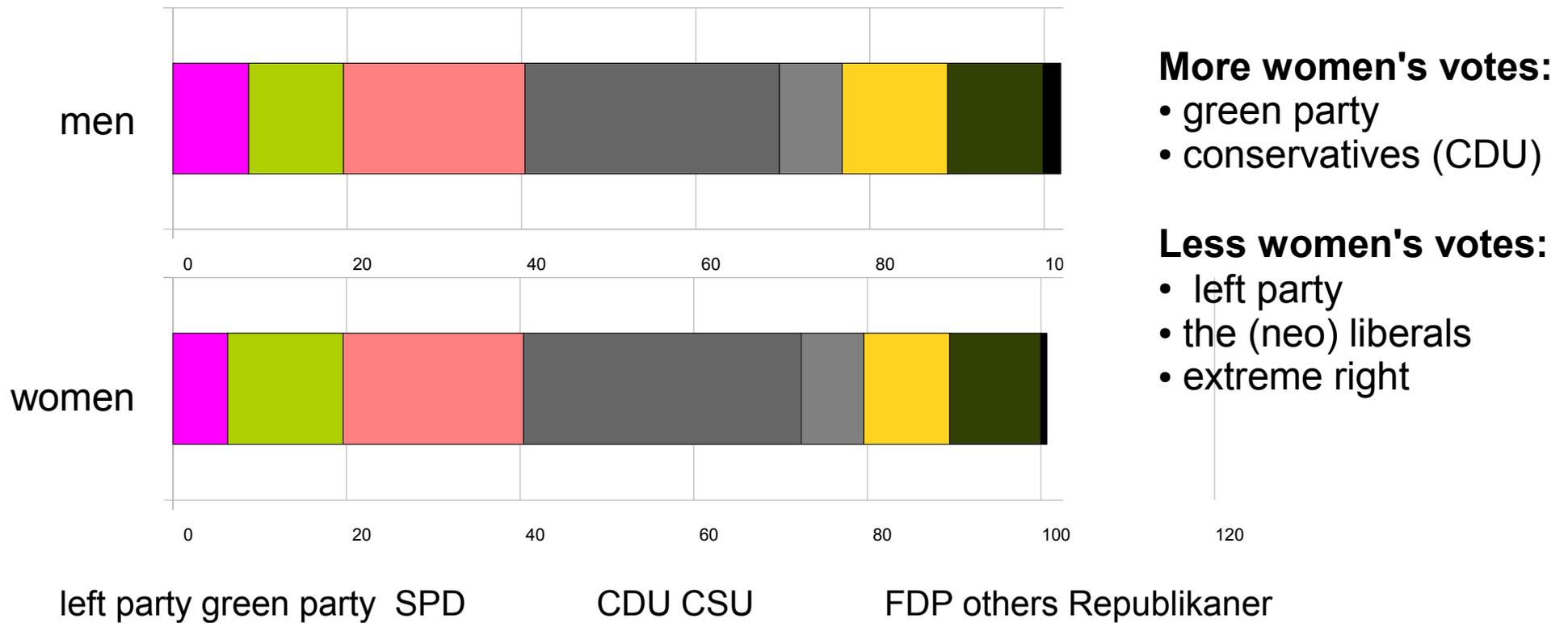
2a. Election results: Which party do women elect?

Austria: Gender gap in the parliamentary elections 2009



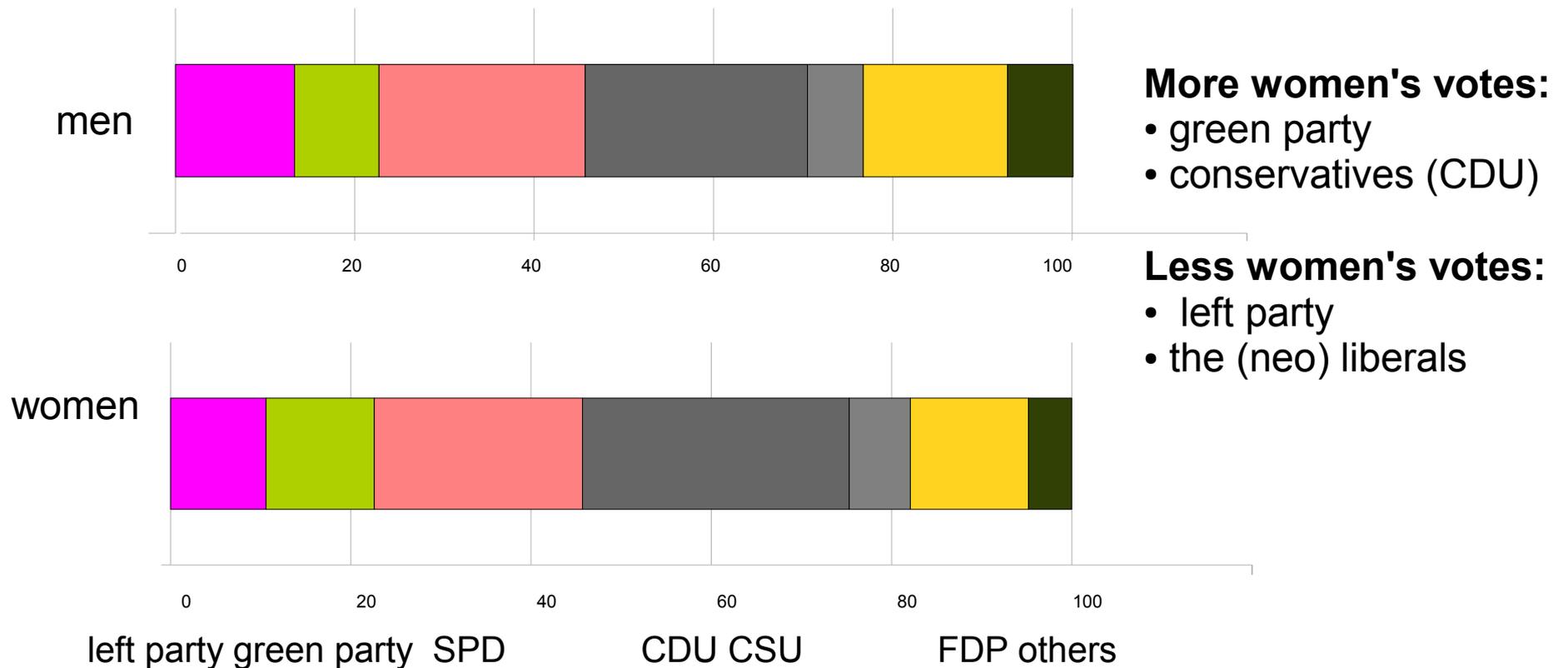
2a. Election results: Which party do women elect?

Germany: Gender Gap in the European elections 2009



2a. Election results: Which party do women elect?

Germany: Gender Gap in the Parliamentary Elections 2009



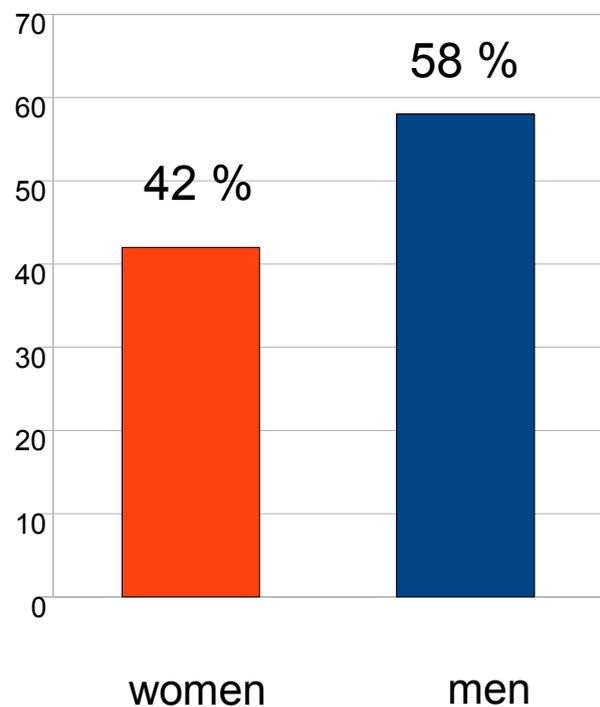
2a. Election results: Which party do women elect?

Some observations from election results:

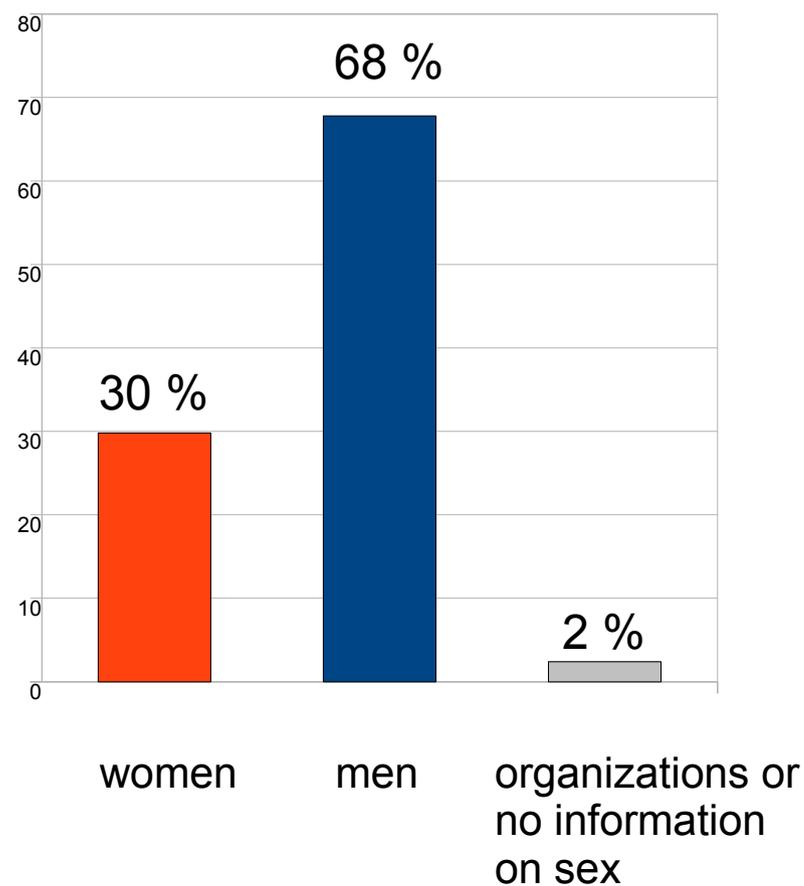
- From 1918 to 1969 more women vote for conservative parties (due to the link of the party and the church and the conservative support of the role of the housewife).
- Since 1969 especially well educated women vote for the (centre) left, more male workers for the conservative party.
- The gender gap was getting wider in the 70s in Europe and the US and is decreasing.
- In Austria the gender gap was particular high (25 %) in the elections in 1999 due to the fact that much less women voted for the extreme right.

2b. Engagement of women in parties and the social movement

Members of Attac Austria:

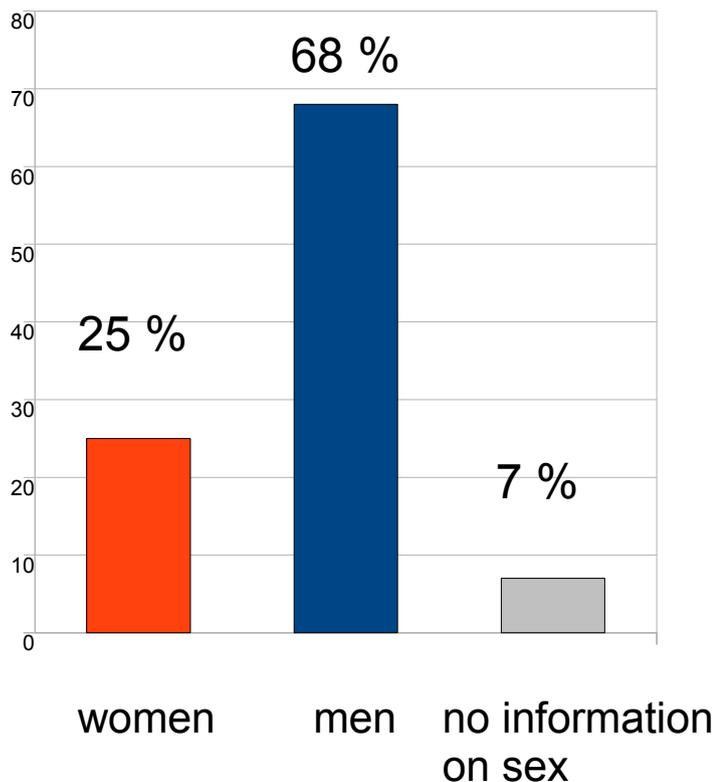


Members of Attac Germany

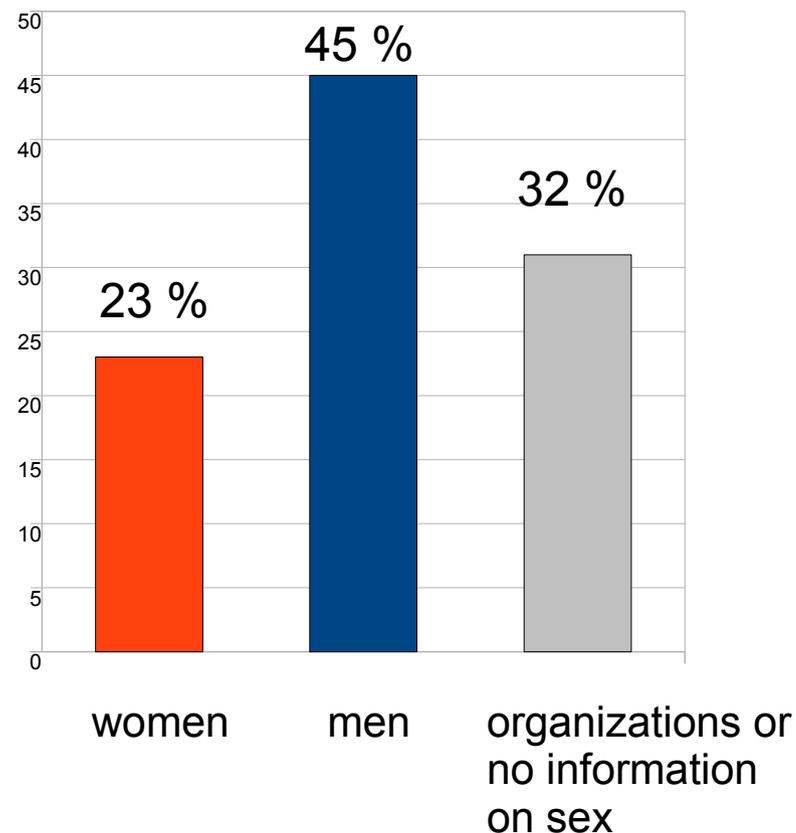


2b. Engagement of women in parties and the social movement

Mailing list of the working group on financial markets and taxes of Attac Germany



Mailing list of the European Network on Finance and Development (ENOFAD)



2b. Engagement of women in parties and the social movement

Engagement and representation of women within Attac

Attac Germany

- less female members
- less women as speakers
- less women quoted in press releases
- men do less organizational / logistic work

Attac Austria

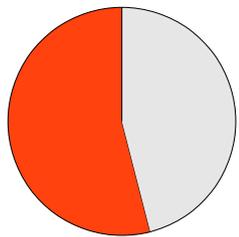
- less female members
- better representation of women in public in the first phase. Attac Austria was associated with women

Although women are more concerned by the existing financial and economic system they do not elect parties and engage in movements which concentrate on changing the system.
What could be done to change this?

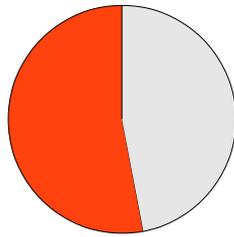
3. Hypotheses: Why do women engage less in the left? How could women be better involved in "the left"?

Better representation of women?

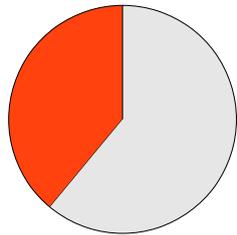
Percentage of female deputies of the Bundestag 2009



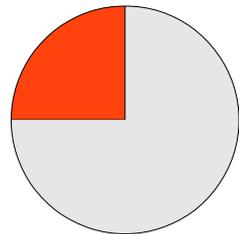
green party



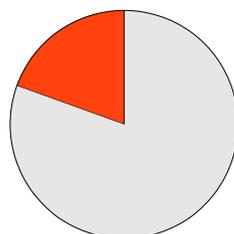
left party



SPD (social democrats)



FDP
(neo liberals)



CDU / CSU
(conservative party)



women
men

Election results by gender



→ no clear relation between representation and women's votes.

3. Hypotheses: Why do women engage less in the left? How could women be better involved in "the left"?

A question of representation?

- In the elections of 2005 less women vote for Merkel because they were not attracted by her topics (economics)
- In the elections of 2009 especially old and young women elected Merkel (because of her popular ministry of family and the role model?)



3. Hypotheses: Why do women engage less in the left? How could women be better involved in "the left"?

Less extreme positions?

In Germany and Austria the green were elected by men in the first years with preference by men, later by women.

Less women elected the neoliberal party and the extreme right.

Less aggressive message?

More men like to provoke. Women seem to dislike aggressive messages

Women are not interested in the topics of the campaigns

Following suffrages german women dislike topics as finance and economy, but are interested in others such as education, family (how to handle family and job), peace, ecology etc.

Men are too dominant

In the left there is a certain quantity of men who think they are wise and understood everything and like to speak and to represent. This is often perceived as embarrassing by women.

But: Preferences of women for parties change over time due to the changing role of women. The gender gap is getting smaller.

3. Propositions: How could women be better involved in "the left"?

Better representation

Stopping men if they become too dominant

Making sure that women have the same time for contributions. Finding discussion form which allow to stop talking men.

Fair division of labor within the left

Women are often expected to do more service, organizational and coordination work. Taking care that this work is done to an equal part by men, so women have the time to improve their knowledge and expertise.

3. Propositions: How could women be better involved in "the left"?

Leave out financial topics? No solution because the financial system highly effects women. The traditional understanding that men are those who deal with money must be overcome → **Explaining economics in a way that women get interested.**

Establish working groups for women. Example: new working group within Attac Germany: "Finanzfrauen".

Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy used by Attac Austria: Worked well as long as influential persons of the board make sure that it is taken into serious.

