Ex-Ante Beliefs about Gender Inequalities, Narratives and Support for Gender Quotas*

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Abstract

While there is general agreement on the need for policy intervention to reduce gender inequalities in the labor market, attitudes towards quotas remain highly controversial. When individuals are provided with information about the effectiveness of gender quotas in reducing gender inequalities in top positions, does it affect their attitudes and support? Existing literature suggests that information influences opinions on policy support, but little is known about how different types of information interact with pre-existing beliefs about the sources of gender inequalities in determining support for such policies. Using a survey experiment conducted among Italian workers and managers (N=2404), our experiment features two distinct information treatments: one highlighting quotas' ability to address demand-side factors, such as discrimination (demand treatment), and another focusing on supply-side issues, such as underconfidence (supply treatment). We assess how these framings interact with participants' ex-ante beliefs about the magnitude and origins of gender inequalities, including cultural stereotypes, traditional gender norms, differences in abilities, and issues related to work-life balance. Findings reveal a gap between self-reported support for gender quotas and "concrete" behavioral support, measured by willingness to donate to an NGO advocating for quotas. While the information treatments do not significantly influence the likelihood of donating, the amount donated is higher for participants exposed to the supply-side framing. This effect is particularly pronounced among individuals with less specific pre-existing beliefs about the causes of gender inequality. These results highlight the role of targeted information in shaping not only attitudes but also the intensity of behavioral support for gender quotas, offering insights into the mechanisms driving public endorsement of policy interventions.

Keywords: gender quotas, gender inequality, support for policy, survey experiment
JEL codes: D63, D83, J16, J22, J31, J71.

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1 Introduction

Despite prolonged efforts over the past decades, gender gaps in labor market outcomes persist in most advanced economies. Women often outperform men in education and are better prepared for the labor market than ever before (Goldin et al., 2006; Kuzmina and Melentyeva, 2021; Bertrand, 2011). However, within a few years after graduation and well before motherhood, men are more likely to be employed full-time, earn higher wages, have better career trajectories, and attain top positions (Francesconi and Parey, 2018; Manning and Swaffield, 2008). Gender pay gaps are particularly pronounced at the top of the earnings distribution, and women continue to be heavily underrepresented in high-status and high-income sectors, occupations, and positions (Blau and Kahn, 2017; Bertrand, 2018). Women still hold only about one-third of leadership positions in the OECD, a figure that has frustratingly remained stable over the past decades despite various interventions (OECD, 2019).

This persistent stagnation highlights the shortcomings of existing measures and emphasizes the urgent need to eliminate stereotypes, reshape workplace culture, enhance work-life balance initiatives, and promote transparency in recruitment and promotion practices. Encouraged by international organizations such as the UN, OECD, and EU, numerous countries have adopted affirmative action policies to advance women's participation and achievements in the labor market. These policies include equal employment opportunity measures (e.g., anti-discrimination and equal pay laws), affirmative action policies (e.g., gender quotas), and pay policies (e.g., pay transparency and salary history bans). For example, the 2013 OECD Gender Recommendation urges member countries to address gender inequalities in employment, explicitly referring to gender quotas in both private and public companies.[1] Some of these measures have been implemented as mandatory quotas (e.g., in Norway, France, Spain, and Italy), while others are recommendations (e.g., in the United Kingdom and the United States).

While quotas mandating high shares of women on boards can drive significant short-term progress, as illustrated in Figure 1, sustaining this progress over time can be challenging. Quotas and targets may yield unintended side effects and may not fully address the pipeline issues hindering women's access to leadership positions. For example, Rigolini and Huse (2021) found that increasing women's board share did not translate to more women holding board director positions overall but instead led to a phenomenon where a few women held multiple board positions, known as the "golden skirts" or board interlocking effect. Moreover, evidence is mixed on whether companies genuinely appointed more female directors or simply reduced board sizes to meet mandated thresholds (Seierstad and Huse, 2017). While there is broad consensus on the need for affirmative action to address gender inequality, this agreement often diminishes when discussions shift from abstract principles to specific policy interventions. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in the context of gender quotas, where initial support for gender equality measures may wane as the details of quota systems are introduced. This discrepancy highlights the complex attitudes surrounding gender quotas, where

[1] More recently, the European Parliament adopted a directive to improve gender balance among directors of listed companies, setting targets for large-listed EU companies to achieve at least 40% representation among non-executive board members or 33% among all directors of the under-represented sex by June 30, 2026 (European Commission, 2012).

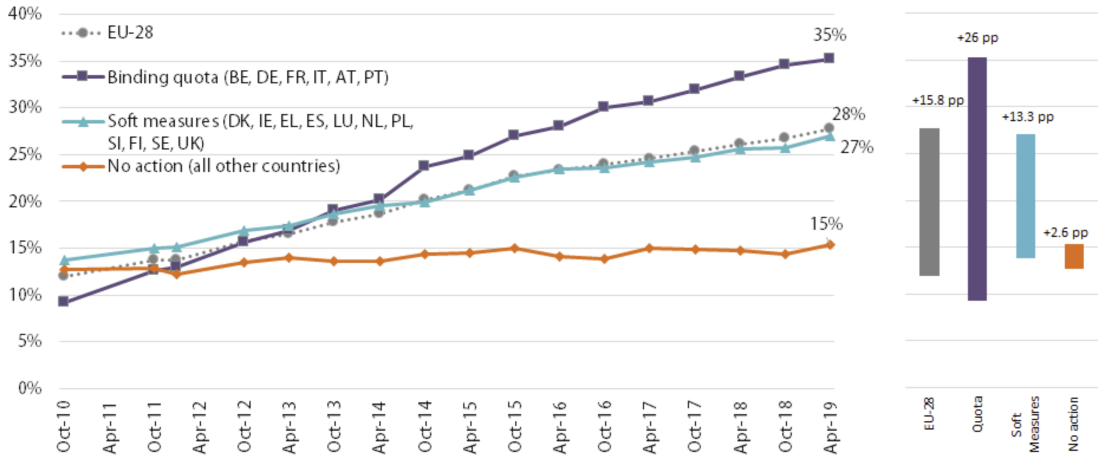


Figure 1: Change in the share of women on boards of the largest listed companies October 2010- April 2019 by type of action taken. Source: EIGE Gender Statistics Database – largest listed companies.Soft measures: Member States with legislative quotas restricted to state-owned companies or applied w/o sanctions.

support may be contingent upon the perceived fairness and implications of the specific measures proposed. Recent research showed that most citizens agree on the need for policies promoting gender equality; however, specific interventions often polarize public opinion. Gender quotas exemplify this dynamic. Proponents argue that quotas effectively equalize opportunities in sectors where women face systematic obstacles due to discrimination or persistent stereotypes. Such policies can redistribute jobs or board positions in favor of women, boosting female empowerment, and positively impacting women's human capital, as well as firm productivity and efficiency (Conde-Ruiz and Profeta, 2015). However, critics claim that women's under-representation results from personal choices rather than discrimination. They argue that affirmative action policies risk promoting less-qualified individuals, potentially decreasing performance when applied to business sectors. This debate highlights the need for comprehensive strategies to support women's advancement beyond initial quotas.

The effectiveness of policy measures, largely depends on the support they receive. Strong backing from key stakeholders and the broader public legitimizes policies, facilitating smoother implementation and compliance. For instance, the success of gender quotas in Norway and other European countries demonstrates how robust support can lead to significant progress in achieving gender balance on corporate boards (Seierstad and Huse, 2017). Conversely, when support is lacking, these policies face resistance and are less likely to achieve their intended outcomes, as seen in instances where organizations reduce board sizes to meet quota requirements without genuinely increasing female representation (Rigolini and Huse, 2021). Both theoretical and empirical studies highlight that the success of any policy—especially gender quotas—depends on the support they receive in the contexts where they are applied (Arve and Valasek, 2023). Furthermore, the specific framing used during policymaking and implementation can be crucial in countering potential backlash associated with the introduction of quotas (Faniko et al., 2017). Thus, widespread and sustained support, coupled with strategic framing, is essential for the long-term success and effectiveness of gender quotas and other affirmative action measures.

We run a pre-registered survey experiment to analyze the impact of different types of information provision on individual willingness to support gender quotas, accounting for prior beliefs about the magnitude and causes of gender inequalities in the labor market. Our sample consists of 2,404 respondents, ranging from top managers to employed white-collar workers, who are potentially affected by quotas and have more specific opinions compared to the general population. We collect information about their work experience and their views on affirmative action policies and their potential implications. The experiment varies the narrative describing how quotas help tackle gender inequalities. Compared to the control treatment, which does not receive any information, the demand treatment focuses on the impact of gender quotas on addressing demand-side determinants of the gender gap, such as discrimination and biases. The supply treatment focuses on how quotas help address supply-side factors, such as role models and underconfidence. Finally, the info causes treatment informs participants about both the demand and supply side causes of the gender gap without mentioning any specific policies or interventions. We use two main dependent variables: *self-reported support for gender quotas* and the *willingness to donate* to an NGO advocating for gender equality through quotas, in the event of winning a 500€ lottery prize, receiving a 50% match on the donation by the researcher team.Our results indicate that while all information treatments positively and significantly influence self-reported support, the demand treatment shows the strongest effect. However, the incentivized behavioral measure reveals a different pattern. Specifically, while the information treatments do not influence the likelihood of donating, they significantly increase the amount donated in the supply treatment compared to both the control group and the info-causes treatment group. Analyzing ex-ante beliefs about the causes of gender inequalities reveals that this effect is primarily driven by individuals with broader, more generalized beliefs, attributing disparities to societal stereotypes and traditional cultural values. In contrast, individuals who hold more sophisticated ex-ante beliefs—such as attributing gender inequalities to differences in abilities, challenges in achieving work-life balance, or discrimination by men—do not exhibit any significant response to the information treatments. The supply-side narrative of quotas alters the perceptions of those with generalized beliefs, positioning quotas as a policy targeting supply-side factors of gender inequality, such as women's abilities and attitudes. **NAT: insistere sull'impatto che info ha in base alla pre-existing knowledge and the content of such knowledge**

Our results are robust to multiple pre-treatment checks, including i) attrition and self-selection of participants, and ii) participants' prioritization of gender equality issues relative to other strategic challenges for companies, as well as iii) their awareness of the existence s(settele) and magnitude of gender inequalities in the labor market (stancheva).

Our paper contributes to two main streams of literature. The first stream focuses on the effectiveness of gender quotas in closing the gender wage gap. Our contribution highlights that support for quotas plays a crucial role in determining their success (Arve and Valasek, 2023; Faniko et al., 2017). The second stream examines how information provision affects the link between perceptions of social issues and the demand for policies (Stantcheva 2022; Haaland and Roth 2023; Alesina et al. 2021; Settele 2022).

Within this second stream, the work by Settele 2022 demonstrates a positive link between beliefs about the magnitude of the gender wage gap and support for affirmative actions. Building on this, we focus on a specific and highly debated policy measure: gender quotas. Importantly, we do not focus solely on public perceptions regarding the importance of gender inequalities or their beliefs about them. Instead, we investigate a broader understanding of the phenomenon, including beliefs about its causes, beliefs useful policies to address gender inequality, and the functioning of quotas themselves. This comprehensive approach allows us to analyze the heterogeneity in treatment effects based on prior beliefs about the causes of the problem and provides insight into whether a deeper knowledge of the functioning of gender quotas can affect support for them. Compared to Settele's contribution, our study has four main differences: i) we focus specifically on gender quotas, a highly effective yet controversial policy measure; ii) our sample is restricted to workers, who are directly affected (both positively and negatively) by the introduction of gender quotas in their workplaces; iii) we build our information treatments on different narratives aimed at strengthening the perceived effectiveness of quotas as mechanisms for solving labor market inequalities by addressing specific problems; iv) we investigate participants' views on the causes of existing gender gaps in the labor market and the effective policies that can address these issues. This richness allows us to analyze the heterogeneity in treatment effects depending on prior beliefs about the causes of the problem. By integrating these elements, our study provides a more clear understanding of how detailed information about the functioning of gender quotas and the causes of the gender inequalities in labor market can influence support for such policies. The remaining of the paper is organized as follow: in section 2 we illustrate the experimental design, in section 3 we present our hypothesis, in section 4 we present the data, in section 5 we show our results and in section 6 we discuss potential mechanisms. Finally section 7 concludes.

2 Review of the literature

bridging between different fields of studies (management, economics, political sciences)

3 Experimental Design

In this section we present our experimental design. We start with an overview of the structure and then we give details on each component.

3.1 Timeline and Overview

Data collection occurred between March and June 2023. The survey was administered in collaboration with Scenari srl, which recruited the sample from their panel of subscribers via email. Prior to assignment to one of the four treatments, participants answered background questions and provided incentivized beliefs about the magnitude of gender gaps, the causes of gender inequalities, and the most effective policies to address them. These preliminary questions are crucial for controlling ex-ante

differences in beliefs about existing inequalities.

Figure 2 outlines the survey structure, which is detailed in the next subsection.

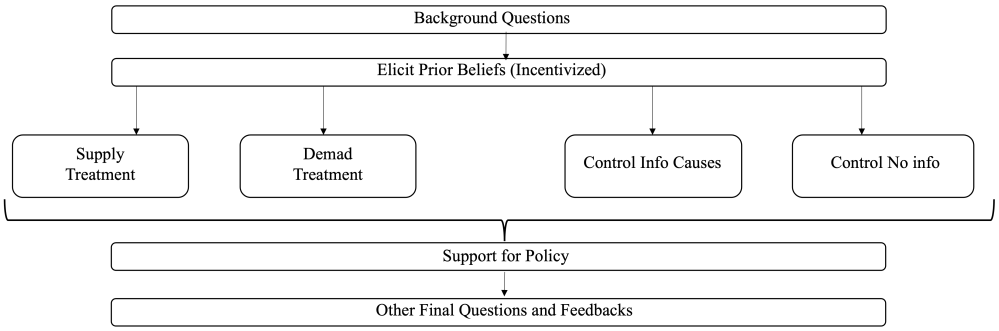


Figure 2: Outline of the survey

3.2 The Survey

Details about the survey are reported in Appendix J, where Table G1 summarizes the structure of the survey and lists the set of variables elicited in each stage.

Ex-ante elicitation of assigned importance to gender inequality After answering a set of background questions (e.g., demographics, job status, experience, and company characteristics), participants were asked to rank a set of goals according to their priority for companies over the next five years. Specifically, the six goals to be ranked were: i) promoting innovation, ii) increasing productivity, iii) increasing diversity and gender equality, iv) promoting technological advancement, v) enhancing teamwork, and vi) promoting projects aimed at reducing environmental impact. This question allows us to control for how much respondents prioritize gender equality before they discover the content of the survey, while also enabling us to check whether the importance assigned to gender equality correlates with the likelihood of completing the survey.

Prior belief elicitation Before the treatment assignment, we elicit respondents' beliefs about three key aspects related to gender inequalities in managerial positions: the scale of the phenomenon, underlying causes, and potential policy interventions. This step is crucial, as participants likely hold personal views about the issue, and these ex-ante beliefs may interact with the treatments.
To evaluate the perceived scale of the phenomenon, we use a set of incentivized questions eliciting beliefs about: i) the average wages of female managers in Italy for every 100€ earned by male managers aged 30 to 49 and employed full-time, and ii) the percentage of women CEOs in the top 50 largest companies in Italy. These measures are straightforward and unambiguous. The wage statistic, being rather specific, cannot be easily looked up online, ensuring that responses reflect genuine beliefs rather than researched answers (Settele, 2022).

Incentives are allocated to a subset of participants, representing 2% of respondents, who are randomly identified after the completion of data collection by the company. Respondents who accurately

estimate the wage disparity within 2€ or the CEO gender ratio within 2% of the latest available Eurostat and EIGE data are rewarded with a 5€ bonus for each correct answer. This incentive structure is designed to enhance respondent attention and mitigate any potential biases stemming from political considerations. By providing financial incentives for accurate answers, we aim to ensure higher quality data and more reliable insights into participants' beliefs about gender inequalities (see Bullock et al., 2013; Prior et al., 2015).

To analyze participants' prior beliefs about the causes of gender inequalities in managerial positions and potential policy interventions, we used a set of open-ended questions. Specifically, we asked: i) respondents' opinions about the causes of gender gaps in wages and managerial positions, and ii) whether they advocate greater state intervention to reduce gender inequalities. For those participants who provided a positive answer, we also asked them to specify what policies they believe would be effective. This approach allows us to understand respondents' beliefs before exposure to the treatments and to analyze the differential impact of the treatments based on participants' prior views on this matter. Stantcheva, 2022.

Information treatments Following this, subjects were divided into four groups: two treatment groups, Supply Treatment (Supply_T) and Demand Treatment (Demand_T), and two control groups: Info Causes Control (InfoCauses_C) and No Info Control (NoInfo_C). Participants in the Supply_T and Demand_T groups were assigned to watch one of two short videos developed by us[2]. These videos elucidate the mechanisms through which gender quotas are intended to reduce discrimination (Demand_T) or empower women (Supply_T), respectively. The InfoCauses_C group received a short video of the same length as the two treatment videos. This video solely presented the causes of gender inequalities in managerial positions (as in the Demand_T and Supply_T videos) without any reference to policies or quotas as instruments to address such inequality. This group served as a control to mitigate potential demand effects, which could otherwise bias our results. Compared to the No Info Control (NoInfo_C) treatment, participants in the Supply_T and Demand_T groups are informed about both the causes of gender inequalities and quotas as an effective mechanism to tackle them. Including this control allows us to account for any priming effects that participants might experience from watching a video and receiving information about gender inequalities. The NoInfo_C group does not receive any additional information or video, and participants skip this stage and directly answer the questions in the next step. The two treatment videos are designed to explain how gender quotas could address the causes of gender inequalities in managerial positions linked to both the demand-side and supply-side of the labor market, as identified by academic research. Demand-side causes pertain to discrimination and biases originating from the labor market's demand side, such as during the recruitment process or from senior colleagues' perceptions of women's leadership capabilities (Beaman et al. 2009; Reuben et al. 2014; Bordalo et al. 2019). Supply-side causes relate to women's characteristics, such as their perceived lack of competitiveness or societal gender roles tied to motherhood and the associated challenges of work-life balance (Niederle and Vesterlund, 2007;

[2]The videos are an animated view of a set of slides, reproduced in Appendix B.

Günther et al., 2010; Porter and Serra, 2020; Cortés and Pan, 2023). The first part of the video is consistent across both supply and demand treatments (see Panels 1 to 5 reproduced in Figure B1 in Appendix B): it introduces the concept of gender quotas and cites the number of European countries that have implemented them to balance corporate boards. Then, the treatments diverge (see Panels 6 to 11 reproduced in Figures B2 and B3 in Appendix B). The two videos diverge as follows:

- **Supply_T** The supply-side treatment introduces various causes of gender inequalities related to the supply side of the labor market. These include the greater family responsibilities traditionally assigned to women (Panel_S 6), the possible lack of aspirations for leadership due to a dearth of role models (Panel_S 8), and a preference for non-competitive environments (Panel_S 10). Additionally, it outlines possible mechanisms through which quotas can help decrease inequalities in this context: by increasing female representation and overcoming barriers (Panel_S 7), creating role models to support ambitions (Panel_S 9), and encouraging women to invest more in human capital and leadership potential (Panel_S 11).

- **Demand_T** The demand-side treatment, on the other hand, introduces causes related to discrimination and bias: taste discrimination, where leadership is seen as a masculine trait (Panel_D 6), statistical discrimination due to a lack of information (Panel_D 8), and implicit bias (Panel_D 10). It also presents three mechanisms by which quotas might reduce discrimination and change social norms in the long term: reducing discrimination and changing social norms (Panel_D 7), increasing information about women's abilities and correcting false beliefs (Panel_D 9), and overcoming potential biases in the selection process (Panel_D 11).

The InfoCauses_C video explains only the causes of gender inequalities, covering both demand and supply sides, without mentioning quotas or any other policy interventions.

All three videos conclude with a final frame indicating that the information provided is based on academic findings, and include a comprehensive list of references for interested viewers. The survey was programmed in such a way that participants were required to watch for a time equal to the length of the videos (about 90 seconds) before proceeding to the next step.

Self-reported policy demand Following the treatment, we assessed respondents' opinions on the effectiveness of gender quotas in leadership positions, asking whether they perceive them as a beneficial tool and if they would support their implementation in their workplace. Additionally, we explored attitudes towards other policies aimed at fostering gender equality, such as gender-neutral language, flexible working hours to enhance work-life balance, extended paternity leave, and wage transparency. Participants were asked to rate the importance of these policies on a four-point scale, ranging from "extremely important" to "not important."

Additional Post-Treatment Questions Finally, to explore the mechanisms behind potential treatment effects, we included additional post-treatment questions. The main focus was on an open-ended exploration aimed at understanding the reasons behind self-reported support or opposition

to the application of gender quotas for leadership positions. After assessing the perceived utility of gender quotas in reducing inequalities (see section on self-reported policy demand), participants were prompted to justify their yes or no responses. Analyzing these answers provides an opportunity to highlight any treatment effect on the reasons explained.

Additionally, we included other questions to further investigate potential mechanisms. For these questions, we randomly varied the framing used to present quotas (i.e., as either decreasing the number of men or increasing the number of women within organizations). Following this, participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements suggesting that quotas might lead women (or men) to work less, aspire to higher positions, or discontinue teamwork. Furthermore, we proposed four categories and asked participants to assess whether they felt more advantaged or disadvantaged by quotas for each: working men, working women, non-working men, and non-working women. Lastly, as a proxy for updated beliefs due to the information provided in the treatments, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the notion that the causes of gender inequalities are i) related to the effort of women or ii) mainly related to social norms and historical reasons.

Behavior (NAT: spostare il discorso sulla experimental demand e social desirability bias nella sezione sulla letteratura e la metodologia e alleggerire qui). In this type of research, concerns about experimenter demand effects and social desirability bias are common. For example, participants may express stronger support for quotas than they actually hold to please the experimenter once they realize the study's topic. Additionally, participants may be influenced by self-image bias, attempting to maintain a positive image of themselves as open-minded and progressive. Despite recent research (De Quidt et al., 2018; Mummolo and Peterson, 2019) suggesting these concerns may not be empirically significant, we incorporated a behavioral measure to mitigate such potential biases. Specifically, participants were informed that by completing the questionnaire, they had been automatically enrolled in a lottery for a chance to win 500€[3]. Before the winner was selected, they were asked to indicate: i) their willingness to donate in case of a win, and if so, ii) an amount ranging from 0€ to 500€. Donations were directed to a NGO supporting gender quotas as a means to reduce inequalities in leadership roles. It was emphasized that each euro donated would be matched with an additional 0.5€ by the experimenters, creating an incentive to donate immediately rather than autonomously after receiving the money. Since this behavioral measure can also be affected by the biases discussed above, we included a further mechanism to allow respondents to opt out of the donation decision without explicitly saying no. Specifically, we employed a "Forced response design" (Blair et al., 2015). Before being asked about their willingness to donate, participants were informed that in the subsequent question, they had to answer (YES or NO) following these steps: i) look at the third-to-last digit of a banknote or their phone number; ii) if the digit is 0, 1, or 2, they must answer NO, otherwise, they were free to choose between YES (i.e., donate) or NO (i.e., do not donate).[4]

[3]The winner was randomly selected by the company after the completion of data collection using a lottery system

[4]The exact wording of the question was as follow: "*In the next question, you will need to answer YES or NO. However, we ask that you follow these instructions to determine your response. Take a banknote or, if you don't have one at hand, think of the third-to-last digit of your phone number. If the third-to-last digit of the banknote or your*

Final questions Finally, we asked participants a set of concluding questions. Specifically, we inquired about: i) their personal view on the importance of gender in their career prospects; ii) whether their workplace has implemented specific interventions to promote gender equality; iii) whether they are aware of the Uni Pdr 125:2022 certification for gender equality and if their company has received such certification; iv) whether they perceived the study as politically biased. Lastly, we asked them v) if they would like to donate the amount received in the beliefs elicitation stage in case they are randomly selected for the payment, and vi) whether they want to receive more information about the articles used to support the data provided in the information treatment.

4 Hypothesis

NAT: da rimpolpare un po' e aggiungere nei risultati se si rispettano o no.
Based on the described design we test the following hypothesis, which have been pre-registered on the 15 Febrary 2023.

1. Treatments with information provision increase support for gender quota compared to No Info (Settele, 2022; Alesina et al., 2021)

2. Treatment focusing on demand sources of inequality increases support more with respect to the treatment focusing on supply-based inqualities (Alesina et al., 2021) since the supply side sources for the labor market are linked with women's preferences inequalities as something "chosen" by women

3. Prior beliefs about the magnitude of gender inequalities affect support for policies (Settele, 2022) (spostare logit nel testo per confermare)

4. Individual characteristics (such as gender, age) are correlated with the treatment effect and consequently support for quotas

5 Data

In this section we discuss the feature of our dataset and present results on the attrition rate indicating that our participants who completed the survey did not self-select into it due to a pre-existing personal interest in the topic.

Summary Statistics The final sample consists of 2404 respondents composed by working individuals from 20-year-old to 87-year-old. Summary statistics about the demographic characteristics of respondents are reported in Table 1. Table A1 in the Appendix reports also the result of a set of pairwise set of balance tests performed between treatments with respect to the variables reported in the table.

phone number is 0, 1, or 2, you must answer NO to the next question. In all other cases (i.e., if the third-to-last digit of the banknote or your phone number is 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9), you are free to answer as you wish, YES or NO."

	Demad_T	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C	NoInfo_C	Total
Women	370	350	334	268	1322
Age 20-25	6	4	13	9	32
Age 26-35	108	63	110	74	354
Age 36-44	193	183	165	140	681
Age 45-54	187	236	189	168	780
Age 55-64	104	125	90	96	415
Age 65-87	31	51	29	31	142
Center	115	117	94	66	392
South	183	225	142	203	753
North	325	315	357	244	1241
Has Children	380	418	354	310	1462
Bachelor Degree or More	320	318	266	256	1160
Observations	629	661	596	518	2404

Table 1: Demographics

	Demad_T	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C	NoInfo_C	Total
Manager	75	74	86	85	320
Executive	65	77	27	24	193
Middle Manager	149	161	125	101	536
HR Manager	59	62	75	86	282
Other Managerial Role	28	36	24	19	107
Employees_white collar	178	166	158	123	625
Self Employed	10	12	4	8	34
Employees_blue collar and Other	58	71	88	58	275
Mean of Years in Same Job Role	11.20	12.55	10.89	11.29	11.51
Mean of Years in Same Firm	13.01	14.49	12.21	14.49	13.10
Public Firm	150	166	156	131	603
Private Firm	432	441	385	322	1580
Non-Profit Firm	47	54	55	65	221
Observations	629	661	596	518	2404

Table 2: Job Characteristics

Inspection of Table A1 reveals that no systematic pattern of selection across treatments can be detected for most variables of interest. However, some pairwise comparisons indicate that certain treatments differ with respect to respondent characteristics. Therefore, we will consistently include demographic controls in our specifications to account for these differences. Table 2 presents summary statistics of our sample concerning job characteristics within each treatment group. Appendix A contains Table A2, which details the results of a series of pairwise balance tests performed between treatments with respect to the variables reported in the table.

Analysis of attrition bias revealed an attrition rate of 12% (N = 330/2734), significantly higher among women (16.75%) than among men (5.50%) (t = -9.0453, p = 0.0000). Tables A4 and A5 show attrition rates by treatment, with pairwise t-tests that indicate no significant differences between treatments, even when considering gender separately. Furthermore, Table A5 examines attrition based on the prioritization of gender equality by the respondents, showing no significant association. This finding is particularly important as it indicates that participants who completed the survey did not self-select into it due to a pre-existing personal interest in the topic.

6 Results

In the following sections, we present our results in three steps. First, in Section 6.1, we focus on the perception of gender inequalities, their causes, and possible solutions elicited before exposing our participants to the information treatments. Second, in Section 6.2, we present the results of our information treatments on i) willingness to donate and ii) the amount donated and iii) finally we discuss potential mechanisms underlying these effects.

6.1 Pre-treatment variables: beliefs about magnitude, causes of gender equality, and possible institutional solutions

To account for the role of prior beliefs in the demand for affirmative actions (see Settele 2022) and potentially in the demand for gender quotas, we elicited respondents' previous knowledge before the treatments. This included information about: i) the magnitude of gender inequalities in the labor market for managerial positions (incentivized); ii) the causes of existing inequalities; and iii) potential policy interventions (see section Prior Belief Elicitation).

6.1.1 Ex-Ante Beliefs about the *magnitude* of gender inequalities

[NAT: spostare la descrizione molto accorciata nella parte del design, e qui mettere un risultato)]
Result 1: people overall underestimate the existence and magnitude of the gaps.
associazione tra probabilità di sottostimare e caratteristiche individuali/lavorative/gender priority. Nel main text un risultato su index finale e in appendice poi disaggregato per indice.
The first one focused on the Gender Wage Gap (GWG) and asked respondents to estimate how much

a woman in a managerial position earns for every 100 euros earned by a man in the same position. The correct answer was 55.64€[5], while the average response was 71.48€ (Std. Dev. 22.90), leading to an estimated gap of 28.52€, with a standard deviation of 22.90€. This significantly underestimates the true gap, suggesting that participants, on average, underestimate the magnitude of the phenomenon. To measure the extent of underestimation, we define the **indexGWG**, computed as the normalized absolute distance between the correct value and the individual answer if the answer is above the correct value, and equal to 0 otherwise[6]. **Table C1 in the Appendix reports results from a set of pairwise t-tests comparing the estimated gap between treatments. We do not detect any significant differences between groups, suggesting that ex-ante beliefs about the magnitude of the GWG were equally distributed. Figure B1 in the Appendix depicts the distribution of the answers to this question for each treatment.(NAT: più essenziale nel testo qui)**

When focusing on the question about the percentage of women CEOs in Italy, the estimated fraction was 19.82% (SD = 17.57%) while the correct answer was 2.9%[7]. Despite this severe underestimation of the issue, we do not find significant differences between treatments. Similar to the GWG, we define the index indexCEO to account for the underestimation in individual answers. This index is computed as the normalized absolute distance between the correct value and the individual's answer if the answer is above the correct one, and equal to zero otherwise. Table C2 in the Appendix reports the results of pairwise t-tests comparing the estimated percentage between treatments. Figure B2 in the Appendix shows the distribution of answers to this question for each treatment. As with the previous index, we do not detect any significant differences between groups, suggesting that ex-ante beliefs about the percentage of women in managerial roles were equally distributed.(NAT: stessa cosa qui)

To obtain a unique measure of underestimation of gender inequalities in leadership positions, we defined the **Underestimate Index**, which is the average of the two indexes defined for each individual question. The Underestimate Index ranges from 0 to 1, where 0 indicates no underestimation bias, and 1 indicates the highest attainable bias. Our analysis shows that our sample is balanced across treatments when considering this new (combined) index. See Table C3, Table C4, and Table C5 in the Appendix for detailed results.

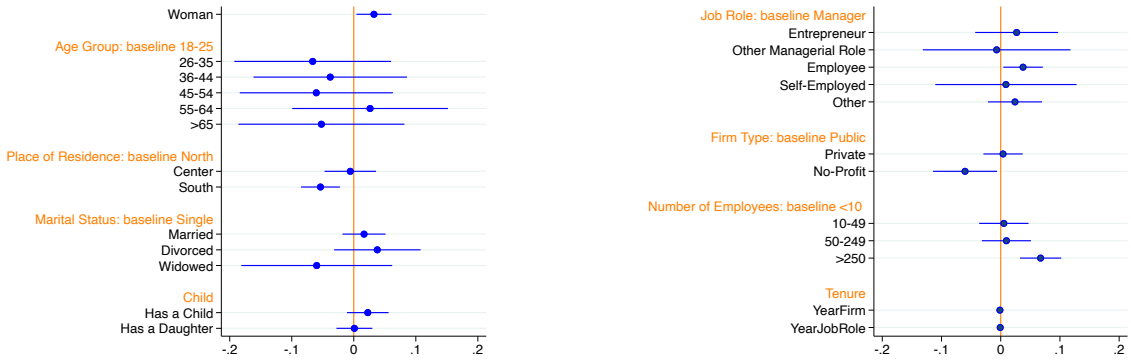
6.1.2 Ex-Ante Beliefs about *causes* of gender equality

The attitude toward quotas may be influenced by individual beliefs about the sources of inequalities in the labor market. For example, individuals who believe that discrimination against women plays a major role may be more willing to accept gender quotas compared to those who attribute gender inequality to women having different (specifically lower) abilities than men. Open-ended questions are crucial for uncovering individuals' primary and intrinsic concerns, as they allow more freedom to ex-

[5]Data source: *Mean annual earnings by sex, age and occupation – NACE Rev. 2, B-S excluding O (Eurostat, 2018)*

[6]We therefore only focus on deviations that underestimate the true value. The percentage of respondents that overestimate the true value is 19.25% (N=463/2404)

[7]Data source: *Largest listed companies: CEOs, executives and non-executives (EIGE, 2018)*



(a) Demographics

(b) Job Characteristics

Figure 3: Correlations between respondents' characteristics and Underestimate Index

press personal views compared to pre-set options in multiple-choice questions Ferrario and Stantcheva, 2022. **In this section, we report the results concerning respondents' perceptions of the causes of gender inequalities in managerial positions. We analyzed the free-form text written by respondents and classified them according to eight main categories identified based on the existing literature discussing the determinants of gender inequality**[8]. The categories used are listed in Table 3, while Table D1 in the Appendix provides examples of answers for each category and the keywords used for classification. Classification was done with a Topic Analysis following Ferrario and Stantcheva (2022). Initially, the text was standardized by converting all words to lowercase, eliminating punctuation, extra spaces, and numerical values. Commonly used words that do not add meaningful context ("stopwords")—such as "and," "the," and "then"—were also removed. The remaining words were simplified to their root forms using the Snowball stemming algorithm. This process grouped variations of similar terms under a single root (e.g., "policy" and "policies" were both reduced to "polic"), thus decreasing the overall number of unique textual components and producing a refined text representation, denoted as $\hat{d}_i$. In the final step, custom topic dictionaries were used to create topic-specific binary variables. These dummy variables were set to 1 whenever a word from each text matched a term in the dictionary [9]. This enabled an efficient thematic categorization of the text, transforming unstructured data into a structured numerical format for further analysis. Regarding the topic dictionary, Stancheva and Ferrario suggest using manual topic selection for open-ended questions, even though alternative supervised and semi-supervised algorithms are available. This recommendation stems from the nature of the responses, which are often shorter and less structured than the texts typically analyzed by automated methods. Manually reviewing a wide range of sample answers is essential to understand how respondents interpret the questions and employ specific terms. The topic indicator variable is set to one if the document includes at least one keyword defining the topic. Consequently, a single document can be associated with multiple topics if it contains keywords from different categories. The identified categories are

[8]To ensure survey completion, respondents were required to answer the open questions with at least 5 characters. Most respondents took the time to answer the questions. Ex-post, only 5.3% (N=128/2404) of messages were judged as meaningless, while 3% (N=72/2404) replied that they had no idea about the causes.

[9]After the main categorization, the unclassified responses were processed using the ChatGPT API to distinguish between those expressing non-classifiable answers and those simply stating they had no idea.

primarily divided into two mutually exclusive groups: generic and specific. Responses in the generic category acknowledge the existence of inequalities shaped by society but without further explaining the possible causes. *Cultural cause* is a mutually exclusive variable, defined to capture the most general answer pointing to a cultural heritage issue, without further analysis or explanation. In contrast, specific responses provide detailed explanations, identifying one or more factors that may drive inequalities. This latter category is further subdivided into multiple subcategories based on the topics addressed by respondents, such as stereotypes about women's abilities or work-life balance (see Table 3). These subcategories are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as a single open-ended response can elaborate on multiple topics.

ID	Category	Definition
		Generic
1	Cultural Causes	It states the presence of a stereotype against women associated to a (traditional) view of the society. It does not specify whether it is related to beliefs about women's work abilities or to their social roles.
		Specific
2	Women's Ability	Motivations related to the perception of women's work capabilities. In 93% of the cases respondents refer to women being undervalued.
3	Work-Life Balance	Motivations related to the woman's social role as the main caregiver within the family. In 72% of the cases it is also perceived as not chosen by women, but rather a consequence of societal norms.
4	Institutional Problem	Motivation linked to an inadequate institutional support.
5	Taste Discrimination and Reaction	Motivations related to pure discrimination by men in positions of power who disadvantage women or to a reaction to a threat represented by women.
6	Denial	Denial of the existence or importance of inequalities.
7	No Idea	The respondent openly says he/she doesn't know.
8	Not classifiable	Responses that do not fall into any of the above categories

Table 3: Description of categories for Causes of Gender Inequalities

Table D2 in the Appendix shows the frequencies of the messages assigned to each category for each treatment and overall. The most frequent category overall is *work-life balance*, while the second most frequent explanation is *women's ability*. The table also includes a set of pairwise t-tests comparing the frequency of each category between treatments. With a few exceptions, we do not find evidence that, prior to the treatment administration, our participants differed in their beliefs about the origins of gender gaps **(alcune differenze ci sono particolarmente tra demand e supply non so se si vuole cambiare questa affermazione)**. Table D3 in the Appendix presents the correlations between the main categories. When examining the responses by gender, as reported in Table D4 in the Appendix, it is observed that, overall, women provide more complete and detailed answers. Their responses are significantly more frequent across almost all categories. The most notable difference is in the domain of work-life balance, where 45.7% of women cite it as a cause, compared to 34.1% of men (t-test, $p = 0.000$). On the other hand, a significantly larger proportion of men than women attribute inequalities to a generic *cultural cause* or cultural heritage, with 21.4% of men compared to 18.2% of women ($p = 0.049$). We performed a series of regressions to test the correlation between

the demographic and job characteristics of respondents and the probability of giving a generic explanation (i.e., cultural causes) or a specific one. As shown in Figure XX in Appendix X, being a woman is significantly negatively correlated with the probability of giving a more generic explanation. Additionally, working in a larger firm (greater than 50 employees) appears to be positively correlated with giving a more generic answer.

Furthermore, we conducted a descriptive analysis to highlight possible correlations between beliefs about the causes of gender inequalities and the underestimation of gender inequalities in managerial roles, identified by the Underestimate Index (see Section 6.1.1). Regarding generic causes, we do not find a significant correlation between underestimating inequalities and giving a generic explanation. However, an increase in the underestimation of inequalities appears to be positively correlated with believing that inequalities are caused by difficulties in work-life balance and taste discrimination against women.

Da fare Esplorare correlazione con under estimation index (non sembra esserci relazione tra questi) by gender (es. uomini più generali) Fede:ho scritto qualcosa subito sopra in relazione al plot in figura 4 **Fgura 4 e 5 la sposterei in appendice e farei riferimento alla correlazione significativa di gender nel testo-c'è anche la correlazione con il numero di dipendenti non saprei se vogliamo accennarlo (vedere il testo sopra)**

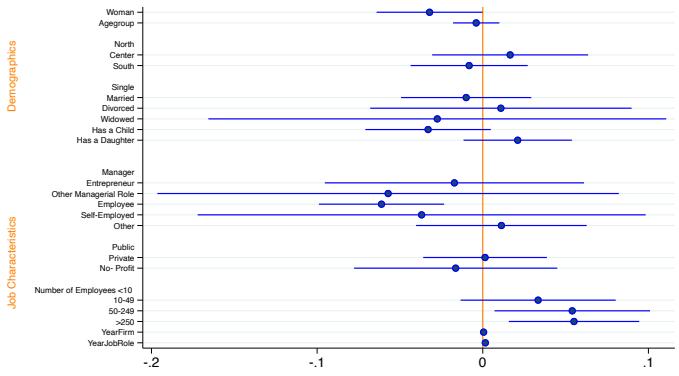


Figure 4: Correlations between respondents' characteristics and Cultural Causes

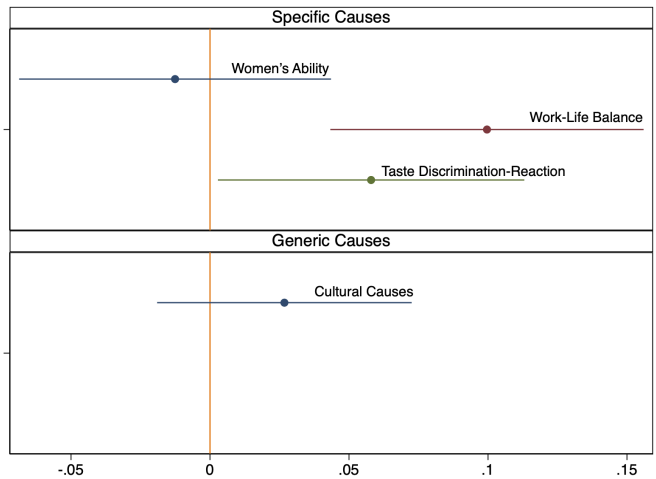


Figure 5: Estimated coefficients of regression of each main specific causes categories and of the generic cause category on Underestimate Index

6.1.3 Views on Policies

After asking about the perceived causes of gender inequality, we also wanted to check for ex-ante preferences regarding the need for policy interventions and the most effective types of interventions. To limit the burden on respondents, prior beliefs about effective interventions for solving gender inequalities were collected using an open-ended question only for those who indicated that they endorse greater state intervention aimed at reducing gender inequalities. Along with the previous questions, controlling for respondents' views on effective policies aimed at closing the gender gap allows us to better estimate the treatment effects and detect the specific impact of the treatment on the demand for policy, specifically on the demand for gender quotas. Quotas, indeed, are likely to generate very different reactions since they embody a form of "reverse discrimination," as discussed in the introduction. As in the previous section, we analyzed the free-form text written by respondents and classified them into nine main categories[10]. The categories used are listed in Table 4. Table E1 in the Appendix provides examples of answers for each category and the keywords used for classification.[11]

Table E2 in the Appendix shows the frequencies of messages assigned to each category for each treatment and overall. It can be noted that both overall and in each treatment, the most frequently advocated policy intervention refers to measures aimed at reducing workplace discrimination. The second most common response indicates the need for interventions supporting motherhood and family. Notably, 9.54% (N=206/2160) of respondents overall favor quotas, while 1.57% (N=34/2160) oppose them. These preferences do not significantly differ between treatments. The table also includes a set of pairwise t-tests comparing the frequency of each category between treatments. With a few exceptions, we do not find evidence that, prior to the treatment administration, our participants differed in their beliefs about the types of policy interventions that could address gender inequalities. Table E3 in the Appendix reports the correlations between the different categories. When considering the answers given by gender, reported in Table E4 in the Appendix, we note a significant difference concerning the support for motherhood and family, which is indicated as a necessary policy improvement by 22,7% of women compared to 12.3% of men (t-test, p=0.000).

ID	Category	Definition
1	Family Support Policy	Support for motherhood and families
2	Pro-Quota	Favorable reference to gender quotas
3	Anti-Quota	Opposing reference to gender quotas
4	Against Discrimination Policy	Policy to decrease discrimination
5	Incentives	Other incentives but not quotas
6	Cultural Change	Change cultural stereotypes starting from education and the media
7	Merit	Reference to merit and the idea that only merit and skills, not gender, should be considered in decisions regarding salary and promotions.
8	No Idea	Not specified or unclear
9	Not classifiable	Responses that do not fall into any of the above categories

Table 4: Description of categories for beliefs about useful policies to decrease inequalities

[10]To ensure survey completion, respondents were required to answer the open-ended questions with at least 5 characters. Of the 2161 respondents who advocated major state intervention to address gender inequalities, 3.47% (N=75/2160) indicated they had no idea and 15.3% (N=332/2160) could not be included in any of the defined categories.

[11]To classify messages, we followed the same procedure described before. we assigned messages to the categories using a binary coding rule: 1 if the message belongs to the category and 0 otherwise. Each message could be assigned to all, one, or none of the categories.

Relazione tra policy e cause (cultural o no, e under estimation).

Chi ha genral causes domanda more general policies di più (ttest su cultural change e against discrimiantion policy). Inserire una tabella nostrando la frequenza delle policy domandate in base alla causa (1=general, 0 otherwise)

6.2 Narratives and Support for Gender Quotas: Causal Evidence

In the previous sections, we demonstrated that, prior to the treatment assignment, our participants did not differ in their ex-ante beliefs about the magnitude of gender inequalities, the sources of these inequalities, and the most effective policies to address them. In this section, we present our main results: i) the causal effect of treatments on stated support for gender quotas, ii) the willingness to donate to support advocacy for gender quotas, and iii) the amount donated.

6.3 Ex-post, unincentivized self-reported support for gender quotas

Consider first the self-reported support for gender quotas. Immediately after the info treatment, and before participants are asked about their willingness to donate, we present them with two open-ended questions about the effectiveness of quotas and their willingness to support their introduction. These measures are insightful but potentially influenced by both experimental demand and self-image concerns, so it is important to consider them together with the other two measures. In Table 5, we report results for the question "*Do you think that quota systems could be a useful tool for reducing inequalities?*". The dependent variable is a dummy that takes the value 1 if the answer was YES, and 0 otherwise. From Model (1) to Model (6), we progressively add a series of controls related to demographics (Model 2), Job Characteristics (Model 3), incentivized beliefs about the magnitude of inequalities (4), beliefs about the causes inequalities (using the classification of the text written in the open-ended questions), and finally beliefs about effective policies (using the classification of the text written in the open-ended questions). Inspection of the table reveals that, compared to the No Info treatment, all information treatments have a positive and significant effect on self-reported support for gender quotas, with the Demand treatment displaying the strongest effect (+14.1%), followed by InfoCauses (+7.4%) and Supply (+5.7%). Additionally, we observe that being a woman significantly increases the likelihood of self-reported support for gender quotas; however, this effect loses statistical significance in models (5) and (6) once we control for beliefs about the causes of gender inequalities and beliefs about effective policies. When comparing treatment effectiveness, the coefficient for the Demand is significantly higher than that for the Supply (p-value = 0.034) and the InfoCauses treatment (p-value = 0.005). However, there is no statistically significant difference between the coefficients for the Supply and InfoCauses (p-value = 0.384). In Model 5, the coefficient for Taste Discrimination-Reaction is positive and statistically significant. This effect remains positive and significant in Model 6. Furthermore, in Model 6, the coefficients associated with policies targeting discrimination (e.g., anti-discrimination policies), pro-quota measures, and family support are all positive and statistically significant, highlighting their importance in shaping support for gender quotas. For all treatments, the effects are robust across all specifications and, in fact, increase in magnitude when adding controls, except for the InfoCauses treatment, whose coefficient does not achieve statistical significance.

	Quota Useful					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
InfoCauses_C	0.074***	0.067**	0.062**	0.061**	0.061**	0.046
	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)
Supply_T	0.057**	0.060**	0.064**	0.062**	0.061**	0.062**
	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.027)
Demand_T	0.141***	0.127***	0.129***	0.131***	0.131***	0.108***
	(0.027)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.029)
Woman		0.047**	0.051**	0.050**	0.051**	0.042**
		(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.020)
Underestimate Index				0.000	-0.000	-0.019
				(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.027)
Gender Priority				0.001	0.001	-0.001
				(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Cultural Causes					0.020	
					(0.024)	
Women's Ability						-0.028
						(0.021)
Work-Life Balance						-0.022
						(0.020)
Taste Discrimination-Reaction						0.048**
						(0.021)
Noidea_causes						-0.207***
						(0.058)
Against Discrimination Policy						0.099***
						(0.019)
Pro-Quota						0.268***
						(0.033)
Family Support Policy						0.049**
						(0.024)
KnowQuota						0.013
						(0.020)
Noidea_policy						0.024
						(0.057)
Demographics		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Job Characteristics			✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.08
Observations	2404	2403	2403	2370	2370	2370

Standard errors are reported in parenthesis. * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.
Dependent variable = self-reporting support for gender quotas. Demographics: Age group, BornAbroad, Macro-region of residence (North, South or Center), Graduated, Marital Status, HasChild, FemaleChildYes (=1 if individual has a female child; 0 otherwise).
Job Characteristics: Sector, FirmType (Public, Private or Non-Profit), Number of Employees, JobRoleSum: 1 Manager; 2 Entrepreneur; 3 Other Managerial Role; 4 Employees_WC; 5 Self-Employed; 6 Employees_BC and Others.

Table 5: Linear Probability Model Estimates for treatments effect on Answer to the question: *Do you think a quota system could be a useful tool for reducing inequalities? Yes/No*

6.4 Incentivized measures of support

Now consider the decision to donate to support quotas and the amount donated. These measures are particularly insightful because, unlike self-reported support for quotas, they are less influenced by experimental demand effects or concerns about maintaining a positive self-image. Supporting quotas in this context involves a tangible (potential) cost: if the respondent wins the lottery, they are obligated to donate the amount they pledged. This distinction allows us to explore the value-action gap—the disconnect between expressed attitudes (self-reported support) and actual behavior (donation decisions)—highlighting the extent to which support for quotas translates into concrete, financially backed action.

Table 6 reports results from a set of Modified Logit regressions where the dependent variable is the decision to donate part of the lottery prize (in case of win) to an NGO supporting gender quotas for decision making. The Modified Logit takes into account the Forced Response Design used for the formulation of the question about the decision to donate.[12] All models include a categorical variable accounting for the treatment, with NoInfo serving as the omitted category. The models in the table progressively add the same sets of controls as in Table 5. Inspection of the table reveals that our treatments have virtually no impact on individuals' willingness to donate. This suggests that the decision to donate is deeply rooted in personal views and that providing information alone is insufficient to alter willingness to donate, in contrast to its impact on self-reported support for quotas. The only significant variables appear in Model 6 and pertain to ex-ante views about effective policies. Specifically, variables associated with anti-discrimination policies and pro-quota measures are positive and statistically significant, indicating that these pre-existing beliefs influence the decision to donate. Additionally, the variable KnowQuota, which captures pre-treatment knowledge of quotas, is also positive and significant, further highlighting the importance of prior familiarity and beliefs in shaping behavioral support. The results presented in Table 6 remain robust across various model specifications and analyses conducted on specific sub-samples (e.g., gender, job role, age). For detailed results, see the online appendix, which includes analyses for age groups (20–34, 35–49, 50–64, > 65) and managerial roles. The information treatments show no statistically significant effect on the decision to donate across models, suggesting that such behavior is primarily influenced by deeply rooted personal views and pre-existing beliefs.

Finally, we focus on participants who are willing to donate and examine the causal impact of information provision on the amount donated. To this end, we conduct a series of OLS regressions, using the natural logarithm of the donated amount as the dependent variable. The results are presented in Table 7. Each model includes a categorical variable accounting for the treatment (with NoInfo as the omitted category) and progressively adds sets of controls, consistent with previous tables. Models (1)–(6) include the same sets of controls as those in Tables 5 and 6, while Models (7) and (8) incorporate additional post-treatment controls. In Model (7), we account for responses on whether quotas are perceived as a useful tool to reduce inequality, as well as participants' views on which groups are advantaged or disadvantaged by the introduction of quotas. Model (8) further includes post-donation controls, such as whether the respondent's workplace implements affirmative action programs, whether participants have personally benefited from such programs, and whether they are aware of the Certification of Gender Equality.[13],and whether they perceived the study as biased. In all models, there is a significant effect associated exclusively with the supply treatment,

[12]The estimates are generated with the RRlog R package from: Heck, D. W. and Moshagen, M. (2018). RRreg: An R package for correlation and regression analyses of randomized response data. Journal of Statistical Software, 85, 1-29.

[13]The Italian Gender Equality Certification System, introduced by the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) and regulated by Law No. 162 of 5 November 2021, aims to promote gender equality in the workplace. It provides organizations with guidelines to implement effective policies that reduce gender disparities, enhance opportunities for women, and ensure fair treatment across all professional levels.

	Decision to Donate					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
InfoCauses_C	-0.130	0.028	0.027	0.018	0.025	-0.004
	(0.175)	(0.188)	(0.193)	(0.194)	(0.194)	(0.198)
Supply_T	0.015	0.017	-0.016	-0.046	-0.040	-0.037
	(0.168)	(0.172)	(0.177)	(0.178)	(0.178)	(0.181)
Demand_T	-0.084	0.082	0.068	0.083	0.086	0.030
	(0.172)	(0.186)	(0.193)	(0.194)	(0.195)	(0.198)
Woman		-0.043	-0.207	-0.205	-0.213	-0.276**
		(0.123)	(0.134)	(0.136)	(0.149)	(0.140)
Underestimate Index				-0.235	-0.267	-0.295
				(0.177)	(0.178)	(0.180)
Gender Priority				0.078***	0.079**	0.071*
				(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.040)
Cultural Causes					-0.231	
					(0.202)	(0.205)
Women's Ability						0.200
						(0.140)
Work-Life Balance						0.172
						(0.137)
Taste Discrimination-Reaction						0.201
						(0.142)
NoIdea_causes						0.139
						(0.424)
Against Discrimination Policy						0.398***
						(0.135)
Pro-Quota						0.377*
						(0.216)
Family Support Policy						0.136
						(0.162)
KnowQuota						0.242*
						(0.139)
NoIdea_policy						-0.386
						(0.458)
Demographics		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Job Characteristics			✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.04
Observations	2404	2403	2403	2370	2370	2370

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Demographics: Age group, BornAbroad, Macro-region of residence (North, South or Center), Graduated, Marital Status, HasChild, FemaleChildYes (=1 if individual has a female child; 0 otherwise)

Job Characteristics: Sector, FirmType (Public, Private or Non-Profit), Number of Employees, JobRoleSum: 1 Manager; 2 Entepreneur; 3 Other Managerial Role; 4 Employees_WC; 5 Self-Employed;6 Employess_BC and Others"

Table 6: Modified Logit Estimates for treatments effect on the decision to donate part of a lottery prize to a NGO supporting gender quotas for decision-making positions. The baseline group is the NoInfo_C so the group that did not receive any additional information

which is substantial (ranging from 66% to 80%) and robust across all specifications. This effect grows stronger as additional controls are progressively included. The demand treatment, while showing a positive effect, is only weakly significant in the initial model and loses statistical significance in subsequent models. In Models (5) and (6), we observe that, on average, individuals who attribute gender inequalities to women's abilities are more likely to donate. Similarly, those who believe in the effectiveness of anti-discrimination policies also show a higher likelihood of donating. These findings suggest that both specific beliefs about the causes of gender disparities and confidence in targeted policy measures play a critical role in shaping donation behavior. Across all models, the coefficient for Woman is negative and significant, indicating that women donate significantly less. Furthermore, underestimating the magnitude of gender gaps shows no significant effect on donation behavior.

	LnDonation					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
InfoCauses_C	0.271	0.009	0.018	0.001	-0.001	-0.004
	(0.263)	(0.285)	(0.301)	(0.302)	(0.305)	(0.302)
Supply_T	0.660***	0.638**	0.683**	0.715***	0.714***	0.683**
	(0.251)	(0.254)	(0.269)	(0.272)	(0.272)	(0.272)
Demand_T	0.450*	0.214	0.218	0.193	0.192	0.162
	(0.258)	(0.286)	(0.298)	(0.299)	(0.300)	(0.300)
Woman		-0.445**	-0.507**	-0.496**	-0.496**	-0.518**
		(0.182)	(0.202)	(0.203)	(0.204)	(0.206)
Underestimate Index				-0.065	-0.065	-0.067
				(0.256)	(0.256)	(0.257)
Gender Priority				0.020	0.020	0.013
				(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.059)
Cultural Causes					-0.013	
					(0.250)	
Women's Ability						0.358*
						(0.208)
Work-Life Balance						-0.097
						(0.198)
Taste Discrimination-Reaction						-0.014
						(0.207)
Noidea_causes						0.517
						(0.694)
Against Discrimination Policy						0.348*
						(0.211)
Pro-Quota						0.187
						(0.308)
Family Support Policy						-0.037
						(0.233)
KnowQuota						0.095
						(0.212)
Noidea_policy						-1.633**
						(0.753)
Demographics		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Job Characteristics			✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.02	0.10	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.18
Observations	416	415	415	412	412	412

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Demographics: Age group, BornAbroad, Macro-region of residence (North, South or Center), Graduated, Marital Status, Number of Children, HasDaughter (=1 if individual has a female child; 0 otherwise)

Job Characteristics: Sector, FirmType (Public, Private or Non-Profit), Number of Employees, JobRoleSum: 1 Manager;2 Entepreneur;3 Other Managerial Role;4 Employees_WC;5 Self-Employed;6 Employess_BC and Others"

Table 7: Treatments effect on the natural log of the amount donated (from 1 to 500).

At this point, we are left with partially contrasting results that vary depending on the nature of the outcome considered. When examining self-reported unincentivized measures, we find a positive and significant effect for all information treatments. However, when considering incentivized donation behavior, we observe no treatment effect on the willingness to donate, and only the supply treatment shows a positive impact on the amount donated. This discrepancy highlights the importance of complementing unincentivized measures with incentivized ones. Unincentivized measures can be influenced by multiple biases, such as experimental demand effects, self-image bias, and framing effects. We are particularly interested in understanding the behavior of respondents who self-report support for quotas after the treatment but are unwilling to donate ex-post. This discrepancy may stem from a belief that supporting quotas through the proposed donation is not an effective strategy, or it may simply reflect the influence of experimental demand or self-image biases. Investigating this further can provide insights into the underlying motivations and constraints affecting support for gender quotas. In Table G12 in the Appendix, we analyze the differences in individual behavior between self-reported unincentivized support for gender quotas and incentivized support. For this analysis, we restrict the sample to respondents who stated support for quotas and define a dependent variable that takes the value 1 if respondents also donated in the lottery. This occurred in 17.50% of cases (N=293/1674). We then regress this dummy variable on our usual set of explanatory variables. Results, reported in the online Appendix, show no treatment effect. We find that women are less likely to donate, as are those who—when responding to open-ended questions about the causes of inequality—deny the existence of gender inequality or express opposition to quotas. Interestingly, individuals who support other policies are more likely to donate. This last finding likely reflects a broader preference for policy interventions that promote gender equality.

7 Mechanism

In the previous section, we examined the effects of providing information about the effectiveness of quotas in addressing labor market inequalities across three key outcomes: self-reported support for quotas, the decision to donate, and the amount donated. For self-reported support for quotas, we find that all information treatments have a positive and significant impact, indicating that providing targeted information influences individuals' stated support for such policies. For the decision to donate, however, information treatments show no significant effect. This suggests that while individuals may express support for quotas, translating that support into actual behavior, such as committing to a donation, is not directly affected by the information provided. In contrast, for the amount donated, the supply treatment has a significant positive effect, while other treatments display no effect. Among those who choose to donate, individuals exposed to this treatment contribute higher amounts compared to other groups. In Table 8, we investigate the underlying mechanisms by interacting variables that capture ex-ante beliefs about the causes of gender inequalities with the treatments. This analysis is conducted for all three outcomes: self-reported support for quotas, the decision to donate, and the amount donated. These interactions allow us to explore how pre-existing beliefs shape the impact of the information treatments on each outcome, providing further understanding of the dynamics of support for gender quotas. Specifically, Models (1)–(2) refer to self-reported support for quotas, Models (3)–(4) refer to the decision to donate, and Models (5)–(6) refer to the amount donated. Models (1), (3), and (5) include controls for ex-ante causes, while Models (2), (4), and (6) additionally include ex-ante beliefs about effective policies. Inspection of Table 8 reveals that for self-reported support for quotas, the coefficients of the interaction terms between Cultural Causes and each treatment are positive and significant, with an effect ranging from 13% to 16%. Among other variables, the coefficients associated with the Demand treatment, Woman, and Taste Discrimination-Reaction are also positive

and significant. In Model (2), when beliefs about effective policies are introduced, the coefficient of the interaction InfoCauses × Cultural Causes fails to achieve significance, while the other interaction terms remain largely unchanged. Additionally, all coefficients for beliefs about effective policies are positive and significant. Consider now Models (3) and (4). The results confirm that the decision to donate is not influenced by the treatment variations. Women are less likely to donate, as are individuals who underestimate the magnitude of gender gaps in the incentivized questions (Model 4). As highlighted previously in Table 6, the only other factors significantly affecting this decision are beliefs in the effectiveness of anti-discrimination policies (*Against Discrimination Policy*) and prior knowledge of quotas (*KnowQuota*). Finally, consider Models (5) and (6), which examine the amount donated. With the introduction of interaction terms, the coefficients for the treatments themselves do not achieve statistical significance. However, the interaction terms reveal a positive and significant effect for individuals holding ex-ante beliefs consistent with Cultural Causes in both the Supply Treatment and InfoCauses treatment. Other findings align with those reported in Table 7: women donate significantly less, while individuals who believe in the effectiveness of Against Discrimination Policy are more likely to donate higher amounts. These results suggest that providing information impacts only those individuals with general or non-specific beliefs about the causes of gender inequalities. For these individuals, the information in the video may have improved their understanding of the causes of inequalities, prompting a behavioral response. Conversely, for respondents holding more specific or firmly established views, the information was likely perceived as either confirming or conflicting with their existing beliefs, which could explain its lack of impact on their donation behavior. The classification of the open-ended questions allows us to highlight the importance of specific prior beliefs in evaluating any additional information provided in favor of quotas.

To further support our mechanism, we analyzed participants' open-ended responses justifying their beliefs about the usefulness of quotas. This question followed the post-treatment inquiry on whether participants thought quotas could address existing inequalities. Using the methodology outlined in Section 5, we classified these responses into categories detailed in Tables G1 and G2 in the Appendix. Table 9 explores the impact of our treatments on participants' ex-post beliefs. After watching the videos, participants were asked if they believed quotas could be a useful tool to address existing inequalities. They could answer "yes" or "no" and were prompted to justify their choice in an open-ended question. For participants who answered "yes," their responses were categorized into three themes: i) For Women: responses emphasizing that quotas are helpful in addressing supply-side issues in the labor market, such as increasing women's participation or boosting confidence; ii) Signaling: responses suggesting that quotas allow women to signal their abilities, which might otherwise be overlooked or undervalued; iii) Fairness: responses highlighting that quotas help restore equality by addressing entrenched systemic inequities perpetuated against women over time. For participants who answered "no," their responses were categorized into two themes: i) Reverse Discrimination: arguments suggesting that quotas are ineffective because they introduce reverse discrimination against men; ii) Unneeded Backlash: arguments asserting that quotas are unnecessary and may lead to unintended consequences that could ultimately harm women. In Table 9, we present a series of regressions conducted on the subset of participants who reported Cultural Causes as their ex-ante beliefs about the causes of existing inequalities (N=467/2404). Each model examines one of the categories used to classify responses to the ex-post question about the effectiveness of quotas. The independent variables include dummies for the treatments, the underestimation index from the incentivized questions, whether the participant believes that gender equality is a key challenge for the future of the company, and a set of dummies controlling for ex-ante beliefs about effective policies. Model (1) focuses on responses attributing the effectiveness of quotas to their ability to address supply-side issues in the

labor market. The coefficient for the Supply Treatment is positive and significant, indicating that this information treatment successfully influenced participants' perceptions of quotas as tools to address supply-side challenges. Model (2) examines responses that attribute the effectiveness of quotas to their ability to help women signal their abilities, which might otherwise be overlooked or undervalued. In this case, all treatment coefficients are positive and significant. For Models (3)–(6), which explore other response categories, the treatment dummies generally show no significant impact, with one exception: the Demand Treatment is negatively and significantly associated with perceptions of reverse discrimination. Taken together, Table 9 illustrates the mechanism through which information provision shifts the beliefs of individuals who previously held general or non-specific views about the causes of gender inequality. However, this effect does not occur when the same analysis is conducted on the subset of individuals holding more specific ex-ante beliefs, such as those attributing inequality to women's abilities or work-life balance issues (See Table X in the Appendix).

These findings highlight the importance of engaging with pre-existing beliefs about the causes of gender inequality. They show that providing targeted information can significantly shape perceptions of quotas as effective tools for addressing specific issues, such as those related to women's participation and opportunities. The detailed classification of open-ended responses further reinforces the impact of the treatments, supporting our hypothesis that beliefs about the underlying causes of gender inequalities play a crucial role in shaping support for policy interventions.

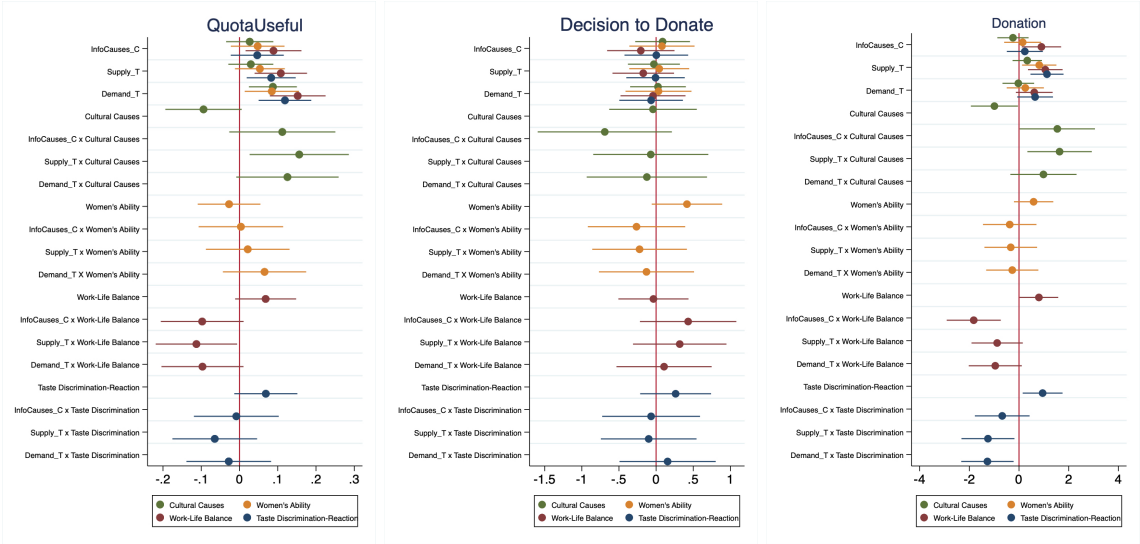


Figure 6: Comparison of Different Outcomes

	ForWomen	Signalling	Fairness	NotRightInstr	ReverseDis	Uneeded_Backlash
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
InfoCauses_C	-0.022	0.249***	-0.035	-0.001	0.010	0.004
	(0.041)	(0.069)	(0.079)	(0.055)	(0.059)	(0.028)
Supply_T	0.070**	0.154***	0.061	-0.061	-0.053	-0.002
	(0.034)	(0.059)	(0.066)	(0.046)	(0.050)	(0.024)
Demand_T	-0.023	0.293***	0.016	-0.012	-0.126**	-0.011
	(0.039)	(0.066)	(0.075)	(0.052)	(0.057)	(0.027)
Woman	0.042*	0.037	0.029	-0.021	0.010	0.009
	(0.025)	(0.043)	(0.049)	(0.034)	(0.037)	(0.017)
Underestimate Index	-0.011	-0.078	0.001	0.009	0.075	0.017
	(0.035)	(0.059)	(0.067)	(0.047)	(0.051)	(0.024)
Gender Priority	0.020**	0.028**	-0.004	0.012	-0.001	0.002
	(0.008)	(0.013)	(0.015)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.005)
Against Discrimination Policy	0.004	0.018	0.048	-0.028	0.044	-0.027
	(0.026)	(0.044)	(0.050)	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.018)
Pro-Quota	0.061	0.005	0.271***	-0.108**	-0.205***	-0.045
	(0.040)	(0.068)	(0.078)	(0.054)	(0.058)	(0.028)
Family Supoprt Policy	0.040	-0.039	-0.007	0.030	-0.054	0.001
	(0.038)	(0.064)	(0.072)	(0.051)	(0.055)	(0.026)
KnowQuota	0.032	0.102**	0.033	-0.021	0.041	0.004
	(0.026)	(0.044)	(0.050)	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.018)
Demographics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Job Characteristics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.08	0.14	0.10
Observations	467	467	467	467	467	467

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Demographics: Age group, BornAbroad, Macro-region of residence (North, South or Center), Graduated, Marital Status, Number of Children, HasDaughter (=1 if individual has a female child; 0 otherwise)

Job Characteristics: Sector, FirmType (Public, Private or Non-Profit), Number of Employees, JobRoleSum: 1 Manager;2 Entepreneur;3 Other Managerial Role;4 Employees_WC;5 Self-Employed;6 Employess_BC and Others"

Table 8: Mechanism: Updated Beliefs for participants who reported Cultural Causes as their ex-ante beliefs about the causes of existing inequalities (N=467/2404)

8 Conclusion

We conducted a survey experiment with a sample of 2404 Italian workers to investigate the factors shaping support for one of the most debated affirmative action measures: gender quotas. Our experiment employed information treatments that framed the effectiveness of quotas in addressing labor market issues from either the demand side (e.g., implicit and explicit stereotypes) or the supply side (e.g., women's lack of self-confidence and aversion to competition). Prior to administering the treatments, we controlled for beliefs about the magnitude of gender inequalities in the labor market, ex-ante beliefs about the causes of these inequalities, and views on effective policies. Our findings reveal that the information treatments positively influence self-reported, unincentivized support for quotas, with the demand treatment showing the strongest effect. However, when examining incentivized outcomes such as willingness to donate, we do not observe a significant treatment effect. Among those who do donate, the supply treatment leads to a significant increase in the amount donated, particularly among male participants. This suggests that the framing of quotas as addressing supply-side barriers resonates more with certain groups. By analyzing open-ended responses on the perceived causes of gender inequalities, we differentiate between individuals with less specific ex-ante beliefs about the causes of gender inequality and those with more defined and specific beliefs (e.g., related to work-life balance or women's abilities). We find that the positive effect of the supply treatment is driven by individuals holding less specific ex-ante beliefs. These results suggest that providing information primarily impacts individuals with general or non-specific beliefs about the causes of gender inequalities. For these individuals, the information in the video may have improved their understanding of the causes of inequalities, prompting a behavioral response. Conversely, for respondents holding more specific or firmly established views, the information was likely perceived as either confirming or conflicting with their existing beliefs, which may explain its lack of impact on their donation behavior. The classification of open-ended responses highlights the importance of specific prior beliefs in evaluating additional information provided in favor of quotas. Further analysis of ex-post beliefs supports this interpretation, showing that the information treatments effectively shaped perceptions of quotas as tools to address supply-side challenges. Our study highlights the importance of understanding how pre-existing beliefs about the causes of inequalities shape responses to information framing. This emphasizes the need for a more targeted approach to policy advocacy and implementation, where the framing of information plays a critical role in shaping public support. Effective communication strategies should address underlying beliefs and biases to foster broader acceptance of gender equality initiatives. In conclusion, our findings contribute to the broader literature on affirmative action and gender equality by exploring the relationship between pre-existing beliefs, information framing, and support for policy measures. This comprehensive approach offers valuable insights for designing and promoting interventions aimed at reducing labor market inequalities and fostering a more inclusive workforce.

A Summary statistics, sample balance and attrition

	(1) Demad_T	(2) Supply_T	(3) InfoCauses_C	(4) NoInfo_C	(5) Total	(6) p-value (1) = (2)	(7) p-value (1) = (3)	(8) p-value (1) = (4)	(9) p-value (2) = (3)	(10) p-value (2) = (4)	(11) p-value (3) = (4)
Women	370	350	334	268	1322	0.034	0.325	0.016	0.272	0.679	0.151
Age 20-25	6	4	13	9	32	0.476	0.082	0.245	0.016	0.065	0.596
Age 26-35	108	63	110	74	354	0.000	0.557	0.184	0.000	0.009	0.062
Age 36-44	193	183	165	140	681	0.237	0.249	0.175	1.000	0.802	0.806
Age 45-54	187	236	189	168	780	0.022	0.453	0.325	0.135	0.241	0.797
Age 55-64	104	125	90	96	415	0.265	0.493	0.375	0.073	0.869	0.126
Age 65-87	31	51	29	31	142	0.040	0.956	0.432	0.039	0.247	0.410
Center	115	117	94	66	392	0.786	0.243	0.010	0.361	0.020	0.151
South	183	225	142	203	753	0.056	0.037	0.000	0.000	0.068	0.000
North	325	315	357	244	1241	0.150	0.004	0.124	0.000	0.851	0.000
Has Children	380	418	354	310	1462	0.297	0.717	0.845	0.163	0.235	0.879
Bachelor Degree or More	320	318	266	256	1160	0.321	0.029	0.625	0.217	0.655	0.110
Observations	629	661	596	518	2404						

Table A1: Demographics: Number of observations and balance test, p-value from t-tests

	(1) Demad_T	(2) Supply_T	(3) InfoCauses_C	(4) NoInfo_C	(5) Total	(6) p-value (1) = (2)	(7) p-value (1) = (3)	(8) p-value (1) = (4)	(9) p-value (2) = (3)	(10) p-value (2) = (4)	(11) p-value (3) = (4)
Manager	75	74	86	85	320	0.683	0.195	0.029	0.086	0.009	0.361
Executive	65	77	27	24	193	0.451	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.935
Middle Mannager	149	161	125	101	536	0.779	0.255	0.087	0.153	0.046	0.542
HR Manager	59	62	75	86	282	1.000	0.073	0.000	0.069	0.000	0.057
Other Managerial Role	28	36	24	19	107	0.411	0.713	0.506	0.239	0.151	0.757
Employees_white collar	178	166	158	123	625	0.196	0.484	0.081	0.572	0.588	0.290
Self Employed	10	12	4	8	34	0.755	0.131	0.951	0.071	0.721	0.159
Employees_blue collar and Other	58	71	88	58	275	0.363	0.003	0.270	0.032	0.804	0.079
Mean of Years in Same Job Role	11.200	12.549	10.892	11.289	11.513	0.018	0.593	0.885	0.005	0.045	0.535
Mean of Years in Same Firm	13.079	14.490	12.212	14.490	13.096	0.027	0.188	0.282	0.000	0.002	0.849
Public Firm	150	166	156	131	603	0.598	0.347	0.572	0.667	0.945	0.737
Private Firm	432	441	385	322	1580	0.452	0.130	0.021	0.430	0.105	0.400
Non-Profit Firm	47	54	55	65	221	0.642	0.267	0.004	0.509	0.013	0.075
Observations	629	661	596	518	2404						

Table A2: Work characteristics: Number of observations and balance test, p-value from t-tests

	Supply_T	Demand_T	t-test	p-value
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	3.4909	3.4554	0.4054	.6853
N	1286			
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C		
	3.4909	3.4513	-0.4509	0.6521
N	1254			
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	Supply_T	NoInfo_C		
	3.4909	3.5136	-0.2462	0.8056
N	1174			
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	Demand_T	InfoCauses_C		
	3.4554	3.4513	-0.04506	0.9641
N	1224			
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	Demand_T	NoInfo_C		
	3.455	3.513	-0.612	0.541
N	1144			
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	InfoCauses_C	NoInfo_C		
	3.451	3.514	-0.655	0.513
N	596	516		

Differences by treatment for gender equality priority values (0-6) within each treatment. The value indicates in which position the participants ranked gender equality among the other five important goals for their workplace in the next five years. The other five issues were: to promote innovation, increase productivity, promote technological progress, increase teamwork, and promote projects aimed at reducing the environmental impact

Table A3: Rank Priority: Gender Equality by treatment

	Supply_T	Demand_T	Total	t-test	p-value
Attrition	90	81	171	0.342	0.736
N	751	710	1461		
	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C	Total		
Attrition	90	81	171	-0.011	0.991
N	751	677	1428		
	Supply_T	NoInfo_C	Total		
Attrition	90	78	168	-0.608	0.543
N	751	596	1347		
	Demand_T	InfoCauses_C	Total		
Attrition	81	81	162	0.322	0.747
N	710	677	1387		
	Demand_T	NoInfo_C	Total		
Attrition	81	78	159	-0.924	0.356
N	710	596	1306		
	InfoCauses_C	NoInfo_C	Total		
Attrition	81	78	159	-0.604	0.546
N	677	596	1273		

Attrition represents the number of respondents who abandoned the survey before completing it. The last two columns show the t-test statistic and the p-value for the differences in mean by treatment

Table A4: Attrition by treatment

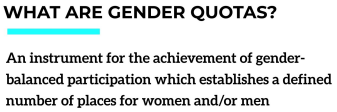
	Complete	Incomplete	Total	t-test	p-value
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	3.477	3.514	3.479	-0.276	0.783
N	2398	142	2540		
Demant_T					
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	3.456	3.667	3.468	-0.805	0.421
N	628	39	667		
Supply_T					
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	3.491	3.538	3.494	-0.188	0.851
N	658	39	697		
InfoCauses_C					
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	3.451	3.326	3.442	0.524	0.601
N	596	46	642		
NoInfo_C					
Rank Priority:Gender Equality	3.514	3.611	3.517	-0.608	0.543
N	516	18	534		

The table contains the sample means for the variable Rank Priority: Gender Equality and the corresponding t-tests and p-values. Each respondent can assign to this item a score between 1 and 6 depending on the perceived relative importance. The mean at the top represents the entire sample, while the means on the lower rows are computed separately for each treatment and control group.

Table A5: Attrition by Rank Priority: Gender Equality

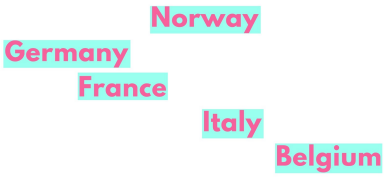
B Treatment Videos

(a) Panel 1

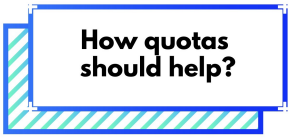


(b) Panel 2

(c) Panel 3

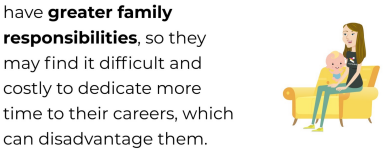


(d) Panel 4



(e) Panel 5

Figure B1: First five panels for both Demand and Supply treatments

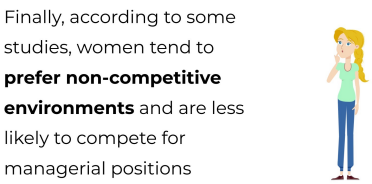


(a) Panel S_6

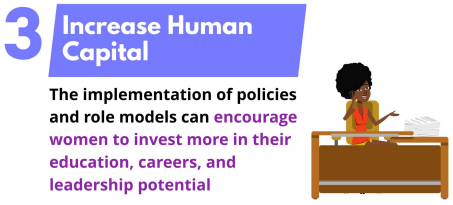
(b) Panel S_7

(c) Panel S_8

(d) Panel S_9



(e) Panel S_10

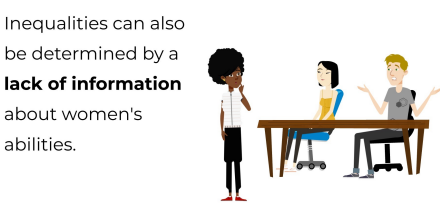


(f) Panel S_11

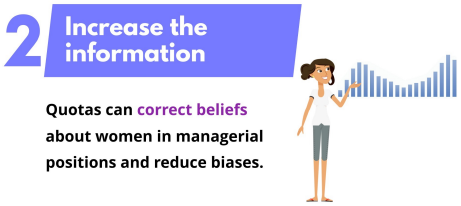
Figure B2: Supply Treatment: Panel 6-11

(a) Panel D_6

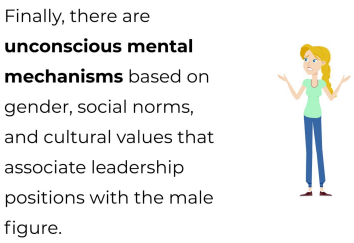
(b) Panel D_7



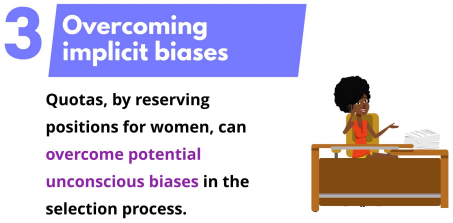
(c) Panel D_8



(d) Panel D_9



(e) Panel D_10

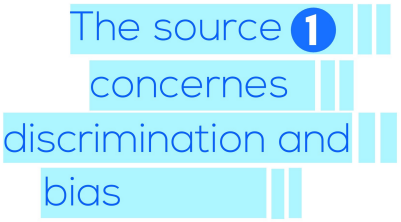


(f) Panel D_11

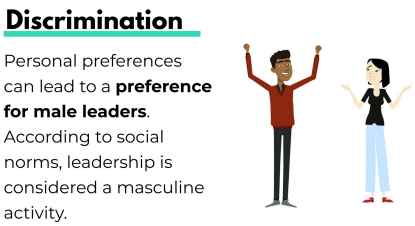
Figure B3: Demand Treatment: Panel 6-11

(a) Panel CI_1

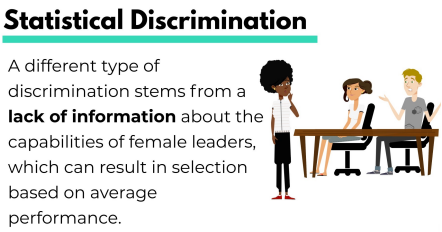
(b) Panel CI_2



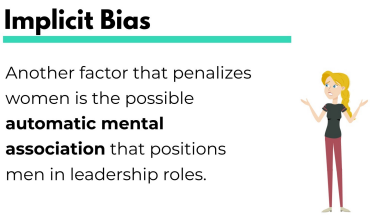
(c) Panel CI_3



(d) Panel CI_4

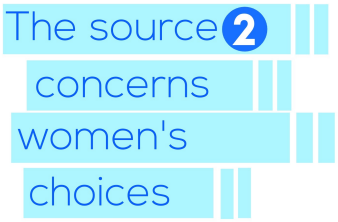


(e) Panel CI_5



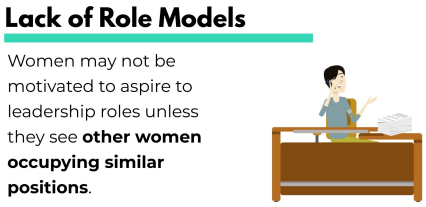
(f) Panel CI_6

Figure B4: Control Info Cauese: Panel 1-6

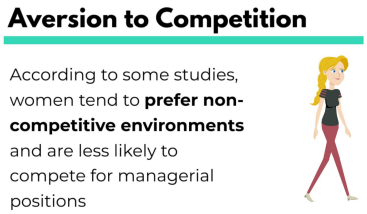


(a) Panel CI_7

(b) Panel CI_8



(c) Panel CI_9



(d) Panel CI_10

(e) Panel CI_11

Figure B5: Control Info: Panel 7-11

C Incentivized Questions

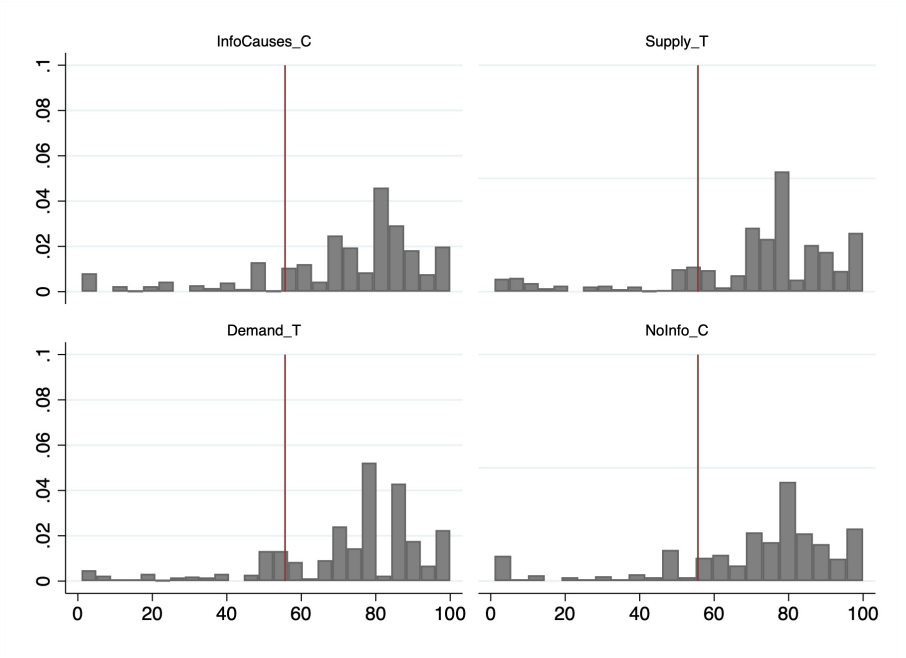


Figure B1: Distributions of prior beliefs about the Gender Wage Gap (as the wage of a female manager for every €100 of a male manager). The red line identifies the right answer:€55.64

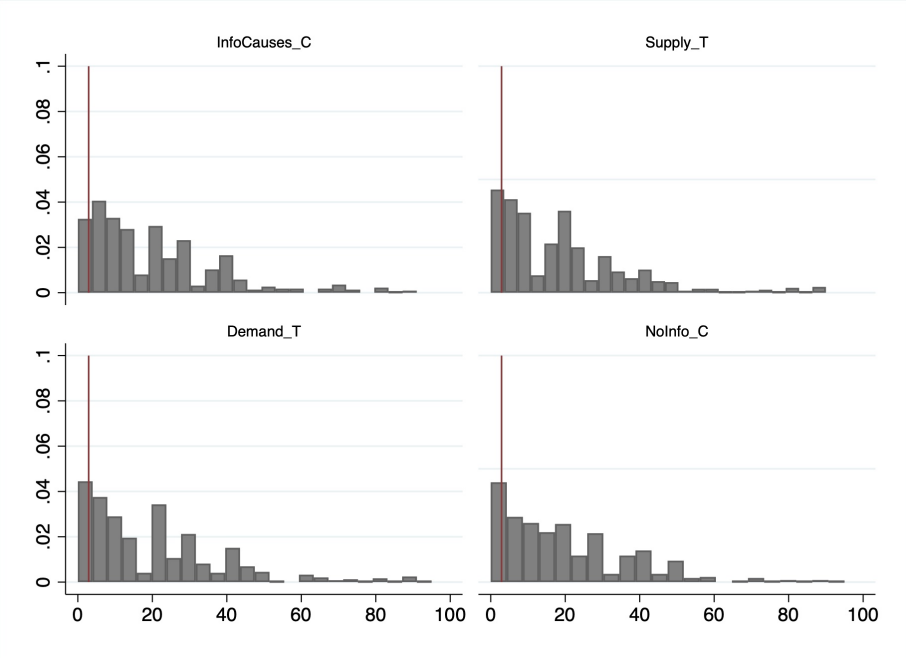


Figure B2: Distributions of prior beliefs about the % of CEO women. The red line identifies the right answer:2.9%

	Supply_T	Demand_T	t-test	p-value
GWG	71.106	72.951	-1.463	0.144
N	1289			
	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C	t	p
GWG	71.106	71.118	0.009	0.993
N	1257			
	Supply_T	NoInfo_C	t	p
GWG	71.106	70.596	0.363	0.716
N	1178			
	Demand_T	InfoCauses_C	t	p
GWG	72.951	71.1178	-1.466	0.143
N	1224			
	Demand_T	NoInfo_C	t	p
GWG	72.951	70.596	1.765	0.078
N	1145			

Table C1: t-test for values of the answers to GWG question (from 1 to 100) by treatment

	Supply_T	Demand_T	t-test	p-value
% CEO Women	18.927	20.020	-1.095	0.274
N	1272			
	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C	t-test	p-value
% CEO Women	18.927	20.279	1.379	0.168
N	1244			
	Supply_T	NoInfo_C	t-test	p-value
% CEO Women	18.927	20.185	-1.238	0.216
N	1168			
	Demand_T	NoInfo_C	t-test	p-value
% CEO Women	20.019	20.185	-0.155	0.877
N	1134			
	InfoCauses_C	Demand_T	t-test	p-value
% CEO Women	20.279	20.019	0.253	0.801
N	1210			

Table C2: t-test for values of the answers to CEO question (from 1 to 100) by treatment

	Supply_T	Demand_T	t-test	p-value
IndexGWG	0.610	0.609	0.0065	0.995
N	1289			
	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C	t	p
IndexGWG	0.610	0.602	-0.401	0.688
N	1257			
	Supply_T	NoInfo_C	t	p
IndexGWG	0.610	0.600	0.535	0.592
N	1178			
	Demand_T	InfoCauses_C	t	p
IndexGWG	0.609	0.602	-0.3932	0.694
N	1224			
	Demand_T	NoInfo_C	t	p
IndexGWG	0.609	0.600	0.528	0.598
N	1145			

Table C3: t-test for values of the IndexGWG (from 0 to 1) by treatment

	Supply_T	Demand_T	t-test	p-value
IndexCEO	0.751	0.737	0.0065	0.995
N	1272			
	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C	t	p
IndexCEO	0.751	0.763	0.741	0.459
N	1244			
	Supply_T	NoInfo_C	t	p
IndexCEO	0.751	0.751	0.055	0.956
N	1168			
	Demand_T	InfoCauses_C	t	p
IndexCEO	0.763	0.737	1.615	0.107
N	1210			
	Demand_T	NoInfo_C	t	p
IndexCEO	0.737	0.751	-0.787	0.431
N	1134			

Table C4: t-test for values of the IndexCEO (from 0 to 1) by treatment

	Supply_T	Demand_T	t-test	p-value
Underestimate Index	0.681	0.673	0.621	0.535
N	1271			
	Supply_T	InfoCauses_C	t	p
Underestimate Index	0.681	0.683	0.154	0.878
N	1244			
	Supply_T	NoInfo_C	t	p
Underestimate Index	0.681	0.676	0.389	0.697
N	1167			
	Demand_T	InfoCauses_C	t	p
Underestimate Index	0.687	0.673	0.781	0.435
N	1209			
	Demand_T	NoInfo_C	t	p
Underestimate Index	0.673	0.676	-0.206	0.837
N	1132			

Table C5: t-test for values of the Underestimate Index (from 0 to 1) by treatment

D OEQ: Causes of Gender Inequalities

ID	Category	Definition	Examples from the answers	Main Keywords
1	Cultural Causes	It states the presence of a stereotype against women associated to a (traditional) view of the society. It does not specify whether it is related to beliefs about women's work abilities or to their social roles.	• Mentality and culture based on the masculine figure • Sexism and the outdated idea that men should dominate • Prejudices of society as a whole • Entirely cultural problem • Effects of a patriarchal society	Mindset; Patriarchy/Patriarchal; Culture/Cultural legacy; Male dominance; Prejudices; Society; Biases; Visions; Stereotypes; Ideas; Power; Sexism;Ignorance; Conception; Old; Historical; Antiquated; Obtuseness; Mind; Tradition; Belief; Narrowness; Misogyny; System; Mentality.
2	Women's Ability	Motivations related to the perception of women's work capabilities.	• The belief that women are less perspicacious in their work. • Inequality. Men are considered more. • The female figure, traditionally associated with household and childcare duties, is believed to be unable to achieve the same results as men due to impediments such as pregnancy, domestic chores, etc. Note this is also assigned to category 3	Ability, Productivity, Capacity, Ambition, Character, Availability, Think, Undervalue, Intellectual, Worth, Underestimate, Discrimination, Trust, Prefer, Moody, Sensitive, Direct, Emotionally Weak, Strength, Retain, Meritocracy, Believe
3	Work-Life Balance	Motivations related to the woman's social role as the main caregiver within the family.	• I think that women are seen as "homemakers" and not inclined towards a career and are unable to manage both family and work environments. • The female figure, being traditionally associated with household and childcare duties, is believed not to be able to achieve the same results as men due to impediments such as pregnancy, domestic chores, etc. Note this is also assigned to category 2_Discrimination	Children, family, mother, pregnancy, work-life balance, leave, home, career, caregiving, domestic duties, maternity, mom, impediment, gestation, postpartum, absences, time, choose, manage, permissions, domestic care
4	Institutional Problem	Motivation linked to an inadequate institutional support.	• Little control from competent bodies. • The mistaken perception of the woman's role, societal male chauvinism, the difficulty in managing potential maternity, and the lack of help and support for women. Note that this also falls under stereotypes in general (category 1) and work-life balance (category 3). • Women have less time to dedicate to work because they have to manage children and family, and work does not guarantee adequate assistance for these issues.Note that this also falls under stereotypes in category 3	Assistance, policies, lack, help, support, institutions, national system, bodies, laws, trade unions, state, welfare.

5	Taste Discrimination & Reaction	Motivations related to pure discrimination by men in positions of power who disadvantage women or to a reaction to a threat represented by women.	• There are so many male managers in charge and they themselves prevent women from entering. • Fear of losing power by the male gender. • Fear of men because they know that women are more skilled.	Strategic positions, managerial positions, leadership positions, disadvantage, obstruct, block, promote same gender, do not accept, high, management, always been, male predominance, decide, power, handled, Fear
7	Denial	Denial of the existence or importance of inequalities.	• From my work experience, I can affirm that these inequalities do not exist. • I don't think it's important. • I don't think this diversity is important; objectively, maternity is an obstacle and hindrance when a woman goes on maternity leave. Note this goes also in category 3	I don't believe, I don't think, there are none.
8	No Idea	the respondent openly says he/she doesn't know.	• I don't know, a man by principle earns more. • I really don't know what to say.	I wouldn't know, I don't know.
7	Non-classifiable	all responses that do not fall into one of the above categories.		

Table D1: Description of categories for Causes of Gender Inequalities **OK**

	(1) Demad_T	(2) Supply_T	(3) InfoCauses_C	(4) NoInfo_C	(5) Total	(6) p-value (1) = (2)	(7) p-value (1) = (3)	(8) p-value (1) = (4)	(9) p-value (2) = (3)	(10) p-value (2) = (4)	(11) p-value (3) = (4)	(12) p-value chi2
Cultural Causes	125	144	104	100	473	0.399	0.277	0.810	0.054	0.297	0.425	0.285
Women's Ability	271	232	248	184	935	0.003	0.602	0.009	0.018	0.880	0.038	0.005
Work-Life Balance	259	243	244	227	973	0.104	0.933	0.367	0.129	0.014	0.331	0.067
Institutional Problem	63	50	78	48	239	0.032	0.306	0.241	0.002	0.397	0.3938	0.095
Taste Discrimination_Reaction	233	212	239	176	860	0.061	0.272	0.281	0.003	0.490	0.035	0.019
Denial	4	7	5	7	23	0.982	0.882	0.448	0.883	0.360	0.322	0.724
No Idea	9	28	52	45	72	0.087	0.127	0.382	0.887	0.417	0.518	0.334
N	629	661	594	518	2402							

Note that one answer can be classified with more than one category so the number of observation N refer just to the total answers. **culturalcauses is mutually exclusive**

Table D2: Causes of Inequalities: Number of observations and balance test, p-value from t-tests**OK**

	Women's Ability	Work-Life Balance	Institutional Problem	Taste Discrimination_Reaction
Women's Ability	1.000			
Work-Life Balance	0.070*	1.000		
Institutional Problem	0.057*	0.063*	1.000	
Taste Discrimination_Reaction	0.375*	0.115*	0.076*	1.000

* $p < 0.05$

Table D3: Causes of Inequalities: correlation matrix **OK**

	Men	Women	t	p-value
Cultural Causes	0.214	0.182	1.971	0.049
Women's Ability	0.363	0.410	-2.341	0.019
Work-Life Balance	0.341	0.457	-5.795	0.000
Institutional Problem	0.088	0.109	-1.722	0.085
Taste Discrimination_Reaction	0.330	0.380	-2.574	0.010
Denial	0.075	0.092	-0.522	0.602
No Idea	0.028	0.024	0.748	0.455
N	2402			

Table D4: Categoriers Causes by gender **OK**

E OEQ: Beliefs Policies

ID	Category	Examples from the answers	Main Keywords
1	Support for motherhood and families	• Hiring more women, providing free daycare centers, bonuses for babysitters. • Promoting flexibility for both men and women Note: this is also classified as category 3. • Honestly, I'm not sure, maybe by providing workplace facilities like daycare centers. • Allowing social bonuses for newborns and enabling smart working for pregnant women. • Effects of a patriarchal society	Daycare centers, Babysitters, Bonuses, Flexibility, Balance, Smart Working, Newborns, Pregnant, Family, Men, Women, Mothers, Fathers, Parental Leave, Paternity, Maternity.
2	Favorable reference to gender quotas	• Equal percentage between men and women, so 50% for each company.. • Putting 50% of women in senior management positions. • Being by law composed of a certain number of women in management.	Equal, 50, 50%, Quota, Number, Law
3	Opposing reference to gender quotas	• We must eliminate gender quotas in politics as well; women have the same abilities as men, and this should be understood	Eliminate quotas, Opposing
4	Policy to decrease discrimination	• Oversight of contracts by INPS (National Institute for Social Security) and the Ministry of Labor. • Adjusting salaries so that, for equal positions, wages do not differ based on the gender of the workers. • Not specifying gender in job applications and conducting blind recruitment processes.	Promote, Equality, Oversight, Contracts, Salary, Wages, Training Courses, Inform, Law, Educate.
6	Incentives	• The government should incentivize companies so that women can also access managerial positions. • Make it clear to entrepreneurs that salaries must be equal; otherwise, higher taxes for employers who do not increase women's salaries and do not have women in their company.	Incentive; Tax

7	Change cultural stereotypes starting from education and the media.	• A strong civic education in schools, where gender equality is taught starting from simple things (such as teaching everyone how to clean, not just females), up to the elimination of stereotypes. • Education must be structured in schools based on equal opportunities, and culturally devaluing the sexist culture.	School, Education, Media
7	Merit	• Ensure fair salaries regardless of gender, reflecting the individual's true abilities. • Salaries should be determined based on skills, not gender. • Evaluate people's competencies regardless of gender.	Merit, Skills, regardless of gender
9	No Idea		I don't know, No idea

Table E1: Description of categories for beliefs about useful policies to decrease inequalities **OK**

	(1) Demad_T	(2) Supply_T	(3) InfoCauses_C	(4) NoInfo_C	(5) Total	(6) p-value (1) = (2)	(7) p-value (1) = (3)	(8) p-value (1) = (4)	(9) p-value (2) = (3)	(10) p-value (2) = (4)	(11) p-value (3) = (4)	(12) p-value chi2
Should the government do more to decrease gender inequalities?												
No	52	91	48	52	243	0.002	0.892	0.299	0.001	0.052	0.248	0.002
Observations	629	661	596	518	2404							
Yes												
Family Support Policy	131	144	141	119	535	0.675	0.234	0.381	0.429	0.627	0.787	0.646
Pro-Quota	73	45	62	36	216	0.416	0.969	0.364	0.413	0.896	0.135	0.680
Anti-Quota	10	6	7	7	30	0.817	0.688	0.601	0.889	0.497	0.393	0.842
Against Discrimination Policy	398	341	351	276	1366	0.000	0.116	0.001	0.009	0.627	0.564	0.000
Incentives	103	99	116	89	407	490	0.159	0.716	0.035	0.305	0.327	0.197
Cultural Change	213	191	195	154	753	0.055	0.671	0.135	0.143	0.755	0.284	0.183
Merit	98	110	96	77	381	0.605	0.801	0.738	0.799	0.408	0.568	0.861
No Idea	19	45	26	30	120	0.002	0.212	0.021	0.061	0.478	0.276	0.012
Observations	629	661	595	518	2403							

Note that one answer can be classified with more than one category so the number of observation refer just to the total answers

Table E2: Useful Policies: Number of observations and balance test, p-value from t-tests **OK**

	Family Support Policy	Pro-Quota	Anti-Quota	Against Discrimination Policy	Incentives	Cultural Change	Merit
Family Support Policy	1.000						
Pro-Quota	-0.238*	1.000					
Anti-Quota	0.093*	-0.467*	1.000				
Against Discrimination Policy	-0.075*	-0.104*	0.110*	1.000			
Incentives	0.140*	-0.146*	0.024	-0.036*	1.000		
Cultural Change	0.018*	-0.167*	0.176*	-0.102*	-0.066*	1.000	
Merit	-0.076*	-0.160*	0.174*	0.342*	-0.050*	0.142*	1.000

* $p < 0.05$

Table E3: Useful Policies: correlation matrix **OK**

	Men	Women	t-test	p-value
Family Support Policy	0.158	0.275	-6.945	0.000
Pro-Quota	0.661	0.688	-0.498	0.619
Anti-Quota	0.113	0.081	0.098	0.334
Against Discrimination Policy	0.544	0.588	-2.134	0.033
Incentives	0.140	0.194	-3.526	0.000
Cultural Change	0.302	0.322	-1.053	0.293
Merit	0.148	0.167	-1.289	0.198
No Idea	0.067	0.036	3.583	0.000
N	2402			

Table E4: Categories Useful Policies by gende **OK**

F Logit Treatment Effect - Decision to Donate

	Decision to Donate					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
main						
InfoCauses_C	-0.118	0.010	0.002	0.009	0.006	-0.029
	(0.159)	(0.170)	(0.024)	(0.173)	(0.173)	(0.175)
Supply_T	0.014	0.007	-0.001	-0.039	-0.034	-0.033
	(0.153)	(0.155)	(0.022)	(0.159)	(0.159)	(0.160)
Demand_T	-0.077	0.054	0.005	0.054	0.055	-0.010
	(0.156)	(0.167)	(0.024)	(0.173)	(0.173)	(0.175)
Woman		-0.037	-0.025	-0.189	-0.197	-0.243*
		(0.112)	(0.017)	(0.122)	(0.122)	(0.124)
Underestimate Index				-0.212	-0.208	-0.258
				(0.158)	(0.158)	(0.160)
Gender Priority				0.069*	0.068*	0.062*
				(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)
Cultural Causes					-0.212	
					(0.146)	
Women's Ability						0.188
						(0.124)
Work-Life Balance						0.154
						(0.121)
Taste Discrimination-Reaction						0.178
						(0.126)
Noidea_causes						0.146
						(0.386)
Against Discrimination Policy						0.353***
						(0.120)
Pro-Quota						0.304*
						(0.185)
Family Support Policy						0.108
						(0.143)
KnowQuota						0.210*
						(0.125)
Noidea_policy						-0.362
						(0.427)
Demographics		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Job Characteristics			✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2			0.03			
Observations	2404	2403	2403	2370	2370	2370

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Demographics: Age group, BornAbroad, Macro-region of residence (North, South or Center), Graduated, Marital Status, HasChild, FemaleChildYes (=1 if individual has a female child; 0 otherwise)

Job Characteristics: Sector, FirmType (Public, Private or Non-Profit), Number of Employees, JobRoleSum: 1 Manager; 2 Entepreneur; 3 Other Managerial Role; 4 Employees_WC; 5 Self-Employed;6 Employess_BC and Others"

Table F1: Logit- Decision to Donate

G OEQ: Motivation for supporting/opposing Quotas

ID	Category	Examples from the answers	Main Keywords
1	Fairness	• Because there shouldn't be gender differences. • Because it would put men and women on more equal footing. • Because it's right for men and women to be equal.	Right, Equality, Same level, Discriminate, Need, Minority, Number
2	Signalling/ Information Value	• For example, it can suggest that the commitment to equality is essential to start a working group. • In this way, one can assess a woman's qualifications and whether she is up to the task. • Because by providing information in this manner, one can dissolve the prejudices held about the role of a manager.	Quality, Height, Information, Prejudices, Equality, Skills, Value, Merit, Prejudice
3	For women's limits	• Because it would make women less anxious, they would know they have the same opportunities as men from the outset. • Because women feel guilty if they tend to want to work at the expense of the role of mother and homemaker. • Certainly, it would encourage some women to be more competitive.	encourage, anxious, empower
4	Do not justify	• Personal reasons lead me to think it could work. • There's no specific reason, it's just my thought and I find it right this way.	
6	Explicit mention of video	• For the reasons outlined in the video I watched.	Video

Table G1: Description of categories for Motivation for supporting gender quotas **OK**

H Mechanism

	QuotaUseful		DecisionDonate		lnDonation	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
InfoCauses_C	0.036	0.027	0.016	0.013	-0.246	-0.243
	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.027)	(0.026)	(0.322)	(0.320)
Supply_T	0.030	0.030	-0.001	-0.002	0.417	0.333
	(0.031)	(0.030)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(0.302)	(0.301)
Demand_T	0.107***	0.087***	0.011	0.004	0.021	-0.028
	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.324)	(0.324)
Cultural Causes	-0.093*	-0.094*	-0.003	-0.007	-0.951*	-0.990**
	(0.052)	(0.051)	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.485)	(0.482)
InfoCauses_C × Cultural Causes	0.138*	0.112	-0.074	-0.078	1.575**	1.543**
	(0.072)	(0.071)	(0.060)	(0.059)	(0.775)	(0.771)
Supply_T × Cultural Causes	0.158**	0.156**	-0.013	-0.010	1.534**	1.634**
	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.056)	(0.056)	(0.664)	(0.660)
Demand_T × Cultural Causes	0.129*	0.125*	-0.017	-0.017	0.847	0.984
	(0.070)	(0.068)	(0.058)	(0.057)	(0.681)	(0.678)
R^2	0.04	0.08	0.03	0.04	0.17	0.19
InfoCauses_C	0.066*	0.047	0.017	0.013	0.144	0.148
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.379)	(0.379)
Supply_T	0.059*	0.053	0.007	0.007	0.887**	0.814**
	(0.034)	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.352)	(0.352)
Demand_T	0.112***	0.085**	0.013	0.006	0.280	0.253
	(0.037)	(0.036)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.382)	(0.380)
Women's Ability	-0.008	-0.027	0.066*	0.062*	0.657	0.588
	(0.043)	(0.042)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.402)	(0.403)
InfoCauses_C × Women's Ability	-0.011	0.004	-0.045	-0.043	-0.367	-0.374
	(0.057)	(0.056)	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.548)	(0.548)
Supply_T × Women's Ability	0.006	0.022	-0.033	-0.033	-0.365	-0.332
	(0.057)	(0.056)	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.542)	(0.539)
Demand_T × Women's Ability	0.047	0.065	-0.026	-0.023	-0.286	-0.271
	(0.057)	(0.056)	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.537)	(0.534)
R^2	0.03	0.07	0.03	0.04	0.16	0.18
InfoCauses_C	0.103***	0.089**	-0.020	-0.023	0.922**	0.903**
	(0.038)	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.401)	(0.403)
Supply_T	0.109***	0.108***	-0.023	-0.023	1.123***	1.059***
	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.355)	(0.355)
Demand_T	0.175***	0.152***	0.002	-0.005	0.671*	0.614
	(0.038)	(0.037)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.378)	(0.376)
Work-Life Balance	0.076*	0.068*	-0.001	-0.005	0.875**	0.802**
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.390)	(0.395)
InfoCauses_C × Work-Life Balance	-0.099*	-0.097*	0.057	0.056	-1.884***	-1.823***
	(0.056)	(0.055)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.552)	(0.554)
Supply_T × Work-Life Balance	-0.111**	-0.113**	0.050	0.048	-0.865	-0.880*
	(0.055)	(0.054)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.525)	(0.525)
Demand_T × Work-Life Balance	-0.101*	-0.097*	0.015	0.015	-1.035*	-0.956*
	(0.056)	(0.055)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.545)	(0.544)
R^2	0.04	0.08	0.03	0.04	0.18	0.20
InfoCauses_C	0.066*	0.046	0.009	0.004	0.219	0.235
	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.370)	(0.369)
Supply	0.081**	0.083**	-0.000	0.001	1.202***	1.127***
	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.028)	(0.027)	(0.339)	(0.339)
Demand_T	0.143***	0.119***	0.001	-0.007	0.688*	0.647*
	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.368)	(0.367)
Taste Discrimination-Reaction	0.084*	0.069	0.045	0.040	1.021**	0.951**
	(0.043)	(0.042)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.408)	(0.408)
InfoCauses_C × Taste Discrimination-Reaction=1	-0.027	-0.008	-0.022	-0.016	-0.647	-0.676
	(0.058)	(0.057)	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.560)	(0.561)
Supply_T × Taste Discrimination-Reaction=1	-0.058	-0.065	-0.011	-0.015	-1.283**	-1.250**
	(0.058)	(0.056)	(0.048)	(0.047)	(0.545)	(0.543)
Demand_T × Taste Discrimination-Reaction=1	-0.039	-0.028	0.014	0.019	-1.321**	-1.272**
	(0.058)	(0.056)	(0.048)	(0.047)	(0.536)	(0.536)
R^2	0.04	0.08	0.03	0.04	0.17	0.19
Observations	2370	2370	2370	2370	412	412

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Demographics: Age group, BornAbroad, Macro-region of residence (North, South or Center), Graduated, Marital Status, Number of Children, HasDaughter (=1 if individual has a female child; 0 otherwise)

Job Characteristics: Sector, FirmType (Public, Private or Non-Profit), Number of Employees, JobRoleSum: 1 Manager;2 Entepreneur;3 Other Managerial Role;4 Employees_WC;5 Self-Employed;6 Employess_BC and Others"

Table G2: Mechanism

ID	Category	Examples from the answers	Main Keywords
1	Wrong Instrument/ Not Effective	• I don't believe it can work without incentives. • Because if female workers aren't supported during critical stages of their professional growth, quotas alone won't solve it (e.g. greater support for mothers who want to pursue a career...) • Because it seems like a utopia to me, despite liking the concept, but difficult to achieve.	Work, Solve, Humiliation, Effectiveness
2	Reverse Discrimination	• I believe that this creates an opposite disparity in treatment; equality is equality when applied correctly. • It doesn't respect meritocracy. • Because it doesn't reward merit but imposes a presence instead.	Meritocracy, Discrimination, Disparity, Fair, Opposite, Equality
3	Unneeded and Backlash	• Women are culturally equal to men. The problems arise later; a pregnancy can put a female manager/woman in a position where she's absent for a long time, and the company may suffer from it. • I believe that women don't need to prove anything. • Women don't need quotas to express their professionalism.	Need
4	Do not justify	• I feel this way based on my experience.	
6	Explicit mention of video	• For the reasons outlined in the video I watched.	Video

Table G3: Description of categories for Motivation for opposing gender quotas **OK**

	(1) Demad_T	(2) Supply_T	(3) InfoCauses_C	(4) NoInfo_C	(5) Total	(6) p-value (1) = (2)	(7) p-value (1) = (3)	(8) p-value (1) = (4)	(9) p-value (2) = (3)	(10) p-value (2) = (4)	(11) p-value (3) = (4)	(12) p-value chi2
Do you think a quota system could be a useful tool for reducing inequalities?												
Yes												
Fairness	194	271	286	194	950	0.105	0.000	0.006	0.005	0.217	0.157	0.000
Signalling	214	165	143	78	600	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.690	0.000	0.000	0.000
For women's limits	49	49	105	58	261	0.000	0.536	0.890	0.000	0.001	0.467	0.000
Do not justify	21	34	29	20	104	0.108	0.177	0.635	0.822	0.296	0.415	0.356
Explicit mention to video	5	3	2	0	10	0.538	0.343	0.066	0.719	0.142	0.213	0.302
Observations	482	451	417	324	1674							
No												
Wrong Instrument	69	92	71	78	310	0.109	0.605	0.039	0.290	0.580	0.124	0.147
Reverse Discrimination	92	128	118	110	448	0.024	0.016	0.003	0.846	0.427	0.554	0.021
Unneeded and Backlash	26	25	40	18	109	0.746	0.046	0.564	0.019	0.780	0.015	0.030
Do not justify	14	23	11	25	73	0.178	0.639	0.016	0.075	0.246	0.005	0.016
Explicit mention to video	0	0	0	0	0	0						
Observations	147	210	179	194	730							

One answer can be classified with more than one category, the number of observation refer just to the total answers
The number of obs refers to the total number of respondents answering respectively YES or NO to the question:
Do you think a quota system could be a useful tool for reducing inequalities?

Table G4: Motivation for supporting/opposing gender quotas: Number of observations, p-value from t-tests **OK**

I Complete Survey

Section	Topics	Main Questions
1	Background questions; job characteristics; company characteristics	• Which is your year of birth? • Which is your country of birth? • Which is your place of residence? • Which is your marital status? • How many children do you have? • Which is your level of education? • How many employees has the company you work for? • In which sector do you work? • Which is the your job role?
1	Assigned importance to gender equality	What do you consider to be the main challenges your organization will face in the next five years? Rank the following in order of importance (where 1 indicates the highest importance and 6 indicates the lowest importance): • Promoting innovation, • Increasing productivity, • Enhancing diversity and gender equality, • Advancing technological progress, • Increasing teamwork, • Promoting projects aimed at reducing environmental impact
2	Beliefs on gender inequality: Incentivized questions	• Think about managers (full-time employees aged between 30 and 49) in Italian companies with more than 10 employees. How much do you think a woman manager with these characteristics earns on average for every 100€ earned by a male manager with the same characteristics? • What do you think is the percentage of women CEOs among the 50 largest publicly listed companies in Italy?
3	Beliefs on causes of gender inequality	• What do you think could be the causes of gender inequalities regarding salary and managerial positions?

3	Beliefs on policies to reduce gender inequality	• What do you think could be the causes of gender inequalities regarding salary and managerial positions? • Do you think the government should do more to promote equality in managerial positions between men and women? *Yes/No* • *if YES to the previous question*: In your opinion, what could be a "good" policy to promote gender equality in managerial positions? • In recent decades, many European countries have adopted gender quotas with the aim of accelerating the achievement of balanced gender representation on boards of directors by establishing a defined proportion (percentage) or number of seats to be allocated to women and/or men, generally based on certain rules or criteria. Were you already aware of what gender quotas are? *Yes/No*
4	Treatment Videos	For Demand_T, Supply_T, InfoCauses_C
5	Self-Reported policy demand	• Some argue that for valid reasons gender quotas should be applied in selection processes for hiring and promotions, while others think these are wrong because they give women an advantage they don't need or haven't earned. Do you think a quota system could be a useful tool to reduce inequalities? • Why? • *if YES to the previous question*: Would you agree with the introduction of a quota system to balance gender representation in managerial positions? *Yes/No*

5	Secondary Outcomes	• If a quota to hire or promote more women (fewer men) in managerial positions were included in your organization, to what extent would it encourage the following behaviors? – Work less – Apply for higher positions in the organization's hierarchy – Stop working collaboratively • Generally, when a quota to promote more women(fewer men) to managerial positions is introduced, which of these groups would you say might be advantaged/disadvantaged by this change? – Working women – Working men – Men not yet in the workforce – Women not yet in the workforce • *If men(women)*: In your opinion, how important is it for men(women) to take action to change labor market dynamics that are unfair to women? *Extremely important; Very important; Moderately important;Not important at all* • Please tell us if you agree or disagree with the following statements *from 1 = "Strongly agree" to 5 = "Strongly disagree")*: – It's a matter of commitment. If women wanted to reach top positions, they should work harder towards their goals to achieve the same results as men. – Past generations and certain social norms have interfered with women's self-determination and contributed to the construction of biases, preventing women from obtaining top job positions. • In your opinion, which of the following measures can promote the reduction of gender inequalities in the workplace? *Extremely important; Very important; Moderately important;Not important at all* – Adopting a more gender-sensitive language, for example by declining job titles held by women in the feminine form or abolishing inclusive masculine language – Promoting work-life balance by implementing flexible working hours – Increasing parental leave recognized for fathers and making it mandatory – Promoting salary transparency

6	Donation	• Participating in this study automatically enters you into a lottery where there is a prize of 500 Euros in vouchers. When the data collection is complete, participants will be sorted in ascending order based on the day and time they completed the questionnaire. Then, 1 participant will be randomly selected. The selected participant will be the winner of the lottery. Before knowing whether you will be the winner or not, you have the opportunity to donate between 0 and 500 Euros to the NGO "European Women's Lobby" (EWL), a network that represents more than 2000 organizations in 26 member states and aims to raise awareness among the public and European institutions in support of women's rights. This association openly supports gender quotas as part of a broader vision to address the underrepresentation of women in economic decision-making. Do you wish to donate part of your potential winnings to the NGO "European Women's Lobby"? *No (I want to receive the full amount); Yes (I want to make a donation)* • Choose the amout to donate: .... We will add the 50%, the total donation would then be ...

7	Other final questions and feedbacks	• Do you think gender is important in your work environment and affects the career prospects of a worker? *Yes/No* • Is there any program promoting gender equality in your organization? *Yes/No* • *If Yes to the previous question and female* Have you benefited from any initiatives promoting gender equality in your organization? • Have you heard about the UNI PdR 125:2022 Gender Equality Certification? *Yes/No* • *If Yes to the previous question* Do you know if your organization has undertaken this process? *Yes/No/I don't know* • Do you think this study was biased? – Yes, left-leaning – Yes, right-leaning – No, I did not perceive any political orientation If Demand_T; Supply_T; InfoCauses_C In the previous section, you were shown a short informative video. Would you like to receive more information about the content of the video and the sources used? *Yes/No* • In the first section of the study, you answered two questions regarding statistical data on gender inequalities in the Italian labor market. When the study is completed, the 25 selected participants will be entitled to a voucher worth 5 euros for each question they answered correctly. Before knowing if you have been selected, we ask you to indicate what you would like to do if you have answered correctly: *Choose between one option: Receive the voucher; Donate an amount equal to the value of the voucher*(If they want to Donate) Choose a charity to donate an amount equal to your voucher: – Save the Children – Save the Children – Doctors Without Borders – Emergency – Action Aid International Italy • Here are the answers to the questions where you were asked to provide estimates: – Answer 1: A female manager (full-time employee) in a company with more than 10 employees and aged between 30 and 49 years earns an average of 55.64€ for every 100€ earned by a man with the same characteristics (processing based on Eurostat data for 2018). – Answer 2: The percentage of women in Italy as CEOs of the 50 largest listed companies in Italy for 2018 is 2.9% (processing based on data collected from the European Gender Statistics Database for 2018).

Table G1: Description of the survey

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