

Project Title: Selecting Women, Electing Women: Explaining UDI Women's Local and National Level Representation

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Project summary: The extreme party of the right in Chile, the Union Demócrata Independiente (UDI), has more women in municipal level office than any other party in the country. It proposed the highest percentage of women candidates for municipal level positions and had the most female mayors, despite the fact that it, unlike three of the other major parties in the country, does not use gender quotas and has no goal of increasing female representation. But despite the large number of UDI women who have been candidates and office holders at the local level, only one of its eleven senators is a woman and an equally small proportion of the party's deputies are women. How has the UDI produced so many women local politicians and so few national level ones?

This project examined whether in its selections for national level elections the UDI is employing a process that is of a different type (based on my own typology of candidate selection which uses two continua: exclusive-inclusive and centralized-decentralized) and whether this can explain why the UDI has high levels of women candidates for local office but low levels of women candidates for national office. I determined that differences in candidate selection processes can explain the fact that women from the UDI are very well represented at the local level but poorly represented in national level politics.