Game Changers: How Electoral Reforms Shape Political Persistence

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Abstract: What drives politicians' persistence? This paper analyses the effect of major institutional changes on candidates' probability of running again and potential gender differences therein. Using a difference-in-discontinuities design and hand-collected data that feature more than 196,000 candidates across Swiss cantonal parliament elections from 1948 to 2021, we find a significant positive effect of postal voting for those who have lost the previous election. Lowering the voting age leads to a 4.8 percentage points increase in general, and is even higher for losing male candidates. Notably, we see a negative effect for female politicians. The introduction of the voting advice application *smartvote* decreases candidates' re-contesting probability substantially. The negative effect is slightly smaller for losing candidates. The introduction of female suffrage increases men's likelihood to run again by 5.9 percentage points. Based on our findings, we argue that institutional variations and gender play a fundamental role in electoral dynamics.

JEL Classification: J16, D72, J71, J24

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1 Introduction

Despite notable progress, women continue to be underrepresented in politics. According to the Global Gender Gap Index 2024, the gap between men and women in politics is larger than in any other domain covered by the report. Whereas the Health and Survival and Education Attainment gender gaps have closed by 96% and 94.9% respectively, the Political Empowerment gap is at only 22.5% ({World Economic Forum} 2024). As of 2023, men still hold more parliamentary seats in almost every country; only Nicaragua, Cuba, and Rwanda exhibit a share of women in parliament of above 50% (Coppedge et al. 2024). Even in countries where the Human Development Index of women is higher than that of men, only 23% of the members of parliament are women. This suggests that women's underrepresentation is not only driven by development or social gender inequality.

Why is it so challenging to close the gender gap in politics? Previous literature adopts various explanatory approaches, emphasizing factors such as anti-female biases among parties and voters, a limited pool of women willing to run for office, and the incumbency advantages historically held by men. An additional, perhaps overlooked factor may be that politicians' persistence rates vary across gender, thus contributing to the endurance of the wider participation gap. So far, only few studies investigate whether men and women – once engaged in politics – differ in their likelihood of persisting and why this potential gender gap in political persistence may arise. Since differences in the persistence of men and women may in return influence eventual office holding and political representation, understanding the electoral dynamics behind male and female politicians' decisions to (not) run again is fundamental. Recently, scholars have presented the first empirical evidence on gender differences in the probability of running again (Wasserman 2018; Peveri and Sangnier 2023; Bernhard and Benedictis-Kessner 2021; Wasserman 2021). The results paint a mixed picture. Notably, we see

varying results depending on the level of analysis, i.e., state- vs. local-level. This raises the question which role institutional settings play in the manifestation of politicians' persistence – and whether these institutional factors may be further accentuated by gender.

To understand candidates' re-contesting decisions, one has to consider the respective electoral setting they are in. In that regard, institutions can play a decisive role. With this study, we therefore ask how institutional features drive politicians' persistence. Specifically, we explore political persistence under varying institutional features. Do changes to the electoral setting influence candidates' decision to (not) run again? And what is the role of gender in these dynamics? We exploit unique hand-collected data comprising election results from 23 Swiss cantons over a time period from 1948 to 2023, which results in candidate-level information on a total of 196,301 candidates running for 43,109 seats. We leverage the extensive time period covered and Switzerland's distinct institutional context to analyse the impact of specific changes to the electoral settings, namely the introduction of female suffrage and postal voting, the lowering of the voting age, and the introduction of *smartvote*, a voting advice application (VAA). We suspect that changes in these institutional features may alter electoral dynamics by affecting the composition of both candidates running in an election and the electorate, and ultimately the decision of individuals to (not) run again. Moreover, we set out to investigate whether these effects are conditioned by gender, thus seeking an additional explanation to the endurance of the gender gap in politics. For our research design, we take advantage of the unique fact that the institutional changes were introduced at different times across cantons. This allows identifying the corresponding impact on the probability of running again independent of time, issue and canton-specific effects. Applying a difference-in-discontinuities design, we find a significant positive effect of female suffrage on men's probability to run again. Postal voting has no significant effect in general, but for those who have lost the previous election, who are 7 percentage points more likely to run again. Lowering the voting age leads to a 4.8 percentage points increase, and is even higher for losing male candidates. Notably, the effect is negative for losing female candidates, suggesting that the positive effect of lowering the voting age is heterogenous among male and female candidates. Lastly, we find a substantial negative effect of the introduction of *smartvote* on politician's probability

to run again, precisely a 15.6 percentage points decrease. This effect is slightly smaller among electoral losers, and we do not find any remarkable gender differences in this case. These results remain robust across different bandwidth selections and various model specifications.

To our knowledge, this is the first study which includes such institutional changes. We can not only ask whether female and male candidates possess different probabilities to run again *in general*, but rather whether their respective probabilities are influenced (differently) by specific institutional changes to the electoral setting. We do not only contribute to the academic literature on and the understanding of politicians' persistence but also provide practical implications on electoral fairness and political representation in subnational politics.

2 Literature

2.1 Politicians' Persistence

The persistence of politicians in office can be explained through various theoretical perspectives, encompassing historical legacies, family ties, gender disparities, institutional structures, and strategic policy considerations. Approaches grounded on historical and regime factors highlight that the legacy of non-democratic regimes plays a crucial role in shaping elite persistence during democratic transitions: When political agents from previous authoritarian regimes are allowed to retain their positions, they can consolidate power, limiting political competition and potentially undermining governance (Martinez-Bravo et al. 2025). For instance, Martinez-Bravo et al. (2025) show that Indonesian regions with prolonged exposure to old-regime mayors have exhibited higher elite persistence, illustrating the lasting impact of authoritarian structures on democratic leadership. A similar approach builds on familial and dynastic factors. Evidence from the Philippines suggests that holding office increases the likelihood of relatives securing political positions, perpetuating elite control across generations. This phenomenon underscores how access to public office and state resources strengthens dynastic political networks, limiting opportunities for newcomers (Querubin 2016).

Further, the persistence of political leaders is significantly affected by party structures and leadership selection mechanisms. Factors such as incumbency, party size, leadership inclusiveness, electoral strength, and government participation shape leadership stability (Vicentini and Pritoni 2021; Saarts 2015). Larger parties and those with broader, more inclusive leadership selection processes tend to exhibit greater leader persistence. Additionally, party survival strategies often prioritize holding office over pure electoral performance. Leadership turnover is more likely when electoral

losses are not offset by continued government participation (Ennser-Jedenastik and Schumacher 2021).

On a more individual level, previous research states that candidates decide to enter a race based on costs and benefits of running, and their expected probability of winning (Carson 2005; Lazarus 2008). The latter incorporates various elements of the electoral and political context, e.g., the presence of an incumbent, negative advertising, and the partisan balance in a district (Bianco 1984). Politicians are more likely to run when conditions favor their party. Powell and Whitten (1993) show that politicians are more likely to seek reelection when local economic conditions are favorable, as these conditions can influence their popularity and electoral success. Maestas et al. (2006) note that personal ambition and career prospects, including the potential for higher office, play a crucial role. Institutional characteristics that foster ambition can also influence decisions, as politicians strategically choose when to run based on political conditions. Focusing on the cost-side, Song (2020) shows that the burden of fundraising can deter politicians from running again – while financial incentives such as campaign expense reimbursements can encourage reemergence, particularly among underrepresented groups like women. The subsequent subsection deals with theoretical approaches as well as empirical work on gender differences in more detail.

2.1.1 Gender differences

A substantial body of behavioral economics research finds that women, on average, exhibit greater risk aversion, show more flexibility in social preferences, and are less inclined toward competition than men (Croson and Gneezy 2009). For example, Niederle and Vesterlund (2007) demonstrate that, even when controlling for ability, women are less likely to enter math competitions than men—largely due to men's overconfidence. Similarly, Buser and Yuan (2019) find that even high-achieving female students are significantly less likely to engage in competitive environments than their male counterparts, and that competitiveness is a strong predictor of future career paths. Interestingly, Adams and Funk (2012) reveal that women who do enter highly competitive fields —- such as corporate boardrooms -— tend to be more risk-seeking than their male peers, likely due to self-selection. A related but distinct concept

Table 2.1: Empirical Evidence on gender differences in re-contesting decisions

Author(s) (Year)	State	Level(s)	Years	Results
Wasserman (2018)	USA, California	local	1995 - 2014	gender recontest gap of 9 pp
Wasserman (2021)	USA, California	state	1967 - 2010	similar responses of male & female candidates
Bernhard and Benedictis-Kessner (2021)	USA, California & cities across the country	local & state	1967 - 2018	similar responses of male & female candidates
Baskaran and Hessami (2022)	Germany, Hesse	local	2001 - 2016	gender recontest gap of 5 pp
Peveri and Sangnier (2023)	France	local	2008 - 2014	gender recontest gap of 14 pp
Nzabonimpa (2023)	Canada	local	1867 - 2021	similar responses of male & female candidates

Note: This table shows empirical evidence on gender differences in politicians' persistence. We thereby only show studies from Proportional Representation Systems, which align with our study's electoral setting.

explores how individuals respond to negative experiences or losses (Ahlqvist et al. 2013; London et al. 2012): Research on rejection-sensitivity indicates that women are more likely than men to withdraw from future competition after experiencing failure (Buser and Yuan 2019), potentially because women tend to evaluate themselves more negatively when receiving subjective feedback and perceive external feedback as a stronger indicator of their abilities than men do (Roberts and Nolen-Hoeksema 1994; Johnson and Helgeson 2002).

Empirical evidence on gender disparities in the probability of running again for office after a close electoral loss presents mixed results. Table 2.1 summarizes the existing studies. Wasserman (2018) finds a gender recontest gap of 9 percentage points (pp) on the local level in the State of California; Peveri and Sangnier (2023), too, point to a significant gap of 14pp between male and female candidates on the local level in France. By contrast, in a later work with US data on the state level, Wasserman (2021) concludes that men and women respond similarly to an electoral loss. Bernhard and Benedictis-Kessner (2021) support this view using local and state level data from California as well as cities across the country. In short, the results are inconclusive. Additionally, the precise reasons of why candidates persist or leave remain unanswered.

2.2 Institutions

Institutions often provide stability by constraining the range of alternatives available to political actors, thereby influencing their behavior and decisions. Changes in these

institutional frameworks can lead to shifts in political behavior as actors adapt to new constraints and opportunities, e.g., with regard to reforms in the voting system (Rusk 1970; Remmer et al. 2008), the assignment of politicial responsibility (Rudolph 2003), or intergroup attitudes (Ratliff et al. 2024). In the context of politicians' descisions to (not) run for re-election, institutions play a crucial role by shaping their ambitions, strategic choices, and risk-taking behaviors. Maestas et al. (2006) conclude that institutions which foster progressive ambition can increase the likelihood of politicians deciding to run for higher office; such institutions create an environment where political conditions are translated into meaningful electoral choices, encouraging politicians to pursue higher positions strategically. In a similar vein, Sheffer and Loewen (2019) find that politicians' confidence in their re-election prospects, often influenced by institutional factors, can lead to overconfidence, which in turn is associated with a higher willingness to take risks. This suggests that institutions that affect electoral confidence can indirectly influence politicians' behavior in office.

In the following subsections, we briefly sketch the major institutional changes relevant to our concrete setting. We focus on potential mechanisms linked to politicians' persistence. In the appendix, we present more detailed information on the implementation processes.

2.2.1 Female Suffrage

The introduction of female suffrage can influence candidates' decisions to run in an election primarily through changes in voter demographics and political competition. The enfranchisement of women introduces a new voter base, which can alter politicians' strategies. For candidates who anticipate potential electoral benefits of engaging this new voter group, the perceived chance of winning increases. To put it differently, politicians may decide to run again if they believe they can harness the support of these newly mobilized voters (Morgan-Collins 2021). New women voters, however, face distinct challenges. As Andersen (1990) argues, treating women simply as a subset of "newly enfranchised voters" is insufficient, as they were not only denied the right to vote but also socialized to see themselves as inherently unsuited for politics. Even after gaining suffrage, prevailing social norms continued to discourage

women from voting (Andersen 1996; Baker 1984). Where sex-disaggregated voter data exist, studies consistently show lower turnout rates among women compared to men in the immediate aftermath of enfranchisement (Duverger 1955; Tingsten 1937). Beyond gender-specific norms that deterred political participation, women were also perceived to share broader traits with other low-motivation voters, such as limited political interest and knowledge. Glaser (1962) suggests that non-voting is the default behavior for such groups, including women. However, when external factors mitigate these disadvantages, women's likelihood of voting should increase significantly. Morgan-Collins (2024) presents evidence that women's turnout approached parity with men's in localities with strong incentives to vote and to mobilize among the general population.

The introduction of female suffrage also alters the pool of candidates eligible to run in an election: Male politicians now face new female competitors. If male candidates perceive them as strong(er) opponents, they might be scared-off and decide to not take the risk of an electoral loss, i.e., they decide not to run. In contrast, if male politicians consider their new female counterparts as "easy wins", they might feel even more encouraged to run because their perceived probability of winning the election is relatively high. Taking into account prevailing social norms at the time of introduction paired with the logical lack of political experience by first-time female candidates, we expect a positive effect of female suffrage on men's probability of running again.

2.2.2 Postal Voting

The introduction of postal voting does not lead to any changes in the pool of eligible candidates nor eligible voters, but it does provide additional means to the electorate. Voting by mail significantly lowers voting costs. Therefore, postal voting might encourage and mobilize previous non-voters to make use of their voting right because it is now associated with much lower costs. Indeed, Luechinger et al. (2007) find a significant positive effect on turnout. Similarly, in an empirical analysis for the 26 Swiss cantons, Hodler et al. (2015) show that lower voting costs due to postal voting are related to higher turnout, lower average education and political knowledge of participants. Bechtel and Schmid (2021) assess the impact of postal voting on

representational inequality in Swiss referendums and conclude that postal voting mobilizes equally across a wide range of political and sociodemographic groups but more strongly activates high earners, those with medium education levels, and less politically interested individuals. Jankowski and Frank (2022) examine ballot position effects in open-list PR systems. The authors present evidence that the effects are substantively weaker among postal voters. Using US-data on a staggered rollout of mandatory vote-by-mail in two states, Barber and Holbein (2020) analyse participatory and partisan impacts. The results point to a slightly increased voter turnout, but no effects on election outcomes at various levels of government.

In conclusion, existing studies suggest that postal voting influences voter composition and behavior, such as reducing reliance on ballot position cues and mobilizing less politically interested individuals, but that it has limited impact on overall election outcomes. We therefore do not expect candidates' decisions to run again to be influenced significantly in general. If any, candidates who have lost in the last election might now consider their chances of winning a bit higher, since freshly mobilized postal voters might not rely on the ballot position. That would imply a differential effect of postal voting among winners and losers.

2.2.3 Voting Age

One of the most significant postwar changes in the franchise has been the reduction in the voting age from 21 to 18 years, in our given setting of Swiss cantonal elections from voting age 19 or 20 to mostly 18, and a few to 16. This widespread change in the franchise resulted in a large number of new voters. Theories of habit formation and transformative voting suggest that voting influences long-term turnout and political engagement, with younger voters potentially experiencing stronger effects from early electoral participation (Jessen et al. 2024). In that regard, Jessen et al. (2024) provide evidence that earlier eligibility leads to immediate increases in various measures of political involvement. However, these short-term effects diminish quickly and do not result in lasting changes in turnout propensity or political engagement. Their findings suggest that in a context with minimal institutional voting barriers, the long-term impact of early voting eligibility is, at best, limited (Jessen et al. 2024).

This is in line with previous research highlighting that young people generally vote less than older citizens (Blais, Gidengil, et al. 2004; Gallego 2009; Holbein and Hillygus 2020). Theoretical approaches on the role of descriptive representation argue that young people might disengage from parties and electoral participation when they do not see themselves represented (Blais and Rubenson 2013; Cammaerts et al. 2014). Castanho Silva (2025) tests this argument with survey data covering 58 countries from 1996 to 2021; his results confirm that, in general, people below 30 are around 2 percentage points more likely to turn out if their preferred party has a 39-year-old as a leader instead of a 70-year-old. Note that this gap is increasing over time, reaching over 4 percentage points in 2021.

Applying these insights to our specific setting, we do hence not necessarily expect a positive effect of the lowering of the voting age on candidates' decision to run again. Only if I am a candidate who believes I can attract specifically young people, the lowering of the voting age increases my perceived chances of winning, and thereby my decision to run again. In line with Castanho Silva (2025), it should be especially younger politicians who might receive electoral benefits from the enfranchisement of younger voters.

2.2.4 Smartvote

We point to a similar line of argument for our third institutional change, namely the introduction of the VAA "smartvote". Research suggests that voters abstain due to a lack of information and cost-benefit considerations. VAAs are online tools that help users align their political preferences with those of candidates and parties. By guiding voters in their decision-making process, VAAs not only challenge rational choice arguments against voting but also help bridge information gaps. Eligible voters who previously abstained from elections might thus be mobilized and get better informed with relatively little cost. Munzert and Ramirez-Ruiz (2021) present a meta-analysis on the effects of VAAs. They find strong evidence for positive effects of VAA usage on reported turnout and vote choice as well as modest evidence on knowledge increase. However, they highlight that effects are substantively weaker in causally more rigorous experimental studies (Munzert and Ramirez-Ruiz 2021). Using a within-subject design

from an original 2019 election survey in Denmark, Wessel Tromborg and Albertsen (2023) state that VAA users who receive advice that is in conflict with their pre-existing party preferences become 16 percentage points more likely to change their vote intention than those who receive advice that is consistent with their preferences. Additionally, users who are undecided about what party to vote for prior to taking the VAA are even more inclined to follow the advice (Wessel Tromborg and Albertsen 2023). Similarly, Enyedi (2015) concludes that preference-confirming outputs increase partly loyalty while preference-disconfirming recommendations decrease it.

In the Swiss context, a few scholars have analysed smartvote's effect on the federal level. Germann and Gemenis (2019) find that smartvote usage significantly increased the individual-level probability to vote in the 2007 federal Swiss election. Ladner and Pianzola (2010) support their findings and highlight that the mobilization capacity is especially pronounced among young voters. In a later work on the 2011 federal elections, Pianzola (2014) shows that smartvote users were significantly more likely to swing vote in the elections. Voter migration among smartvote users was most prominent towards the Green Liberal Party. A field experiment with University students during the 2011 federal elections suggests that there exist significant changes in the awarded scores for the top party preference among smartvote users (Pianzola et al. 2012). The assigned propensity-to-vote score for the top party preferences increases significantly among those voters who used smartvote. Among those who changed their top party propensity-to-vote score, most remained with the same party choice. The authors conclude that being exposed to detailed information about vote alternatives seems to incline voters to consider these alternative options more closely and include the closest ones as part of their future choice set (Pianzola et al. 2012). Benesch et al. (2023) examine smartvote's effects on the cantonal level. They find no effect on turnout, but that voters more actively select candidates instead of parties by splitting their ballot. Further, no specific party seems to benefit from the change in voting behavior.

Based on these insights, we hypothesize to find no substantial effect of smartvote on candidates' re-contesting decision. If any, it might be a small positive effect considering that smartvote could potentially mobilize previous non-voters since the costs to get informed are decreased.

3 Institutional context

Switzerland is a highly decentralized country, structured across three levels of government: the federal government, the cantons, and the municipalities. Both the cantons and municipalities possess significant autonomy and sovereignty, allowing them to levy their own taxes and provide public services in areas such as health, education, and culture. Each canton operates under its own constitution and has its own government, parliament, and judicial system (Federal Chancellery 2022). Since this study focuses on the cantonal level, the following subsections summarize key institutional features of the cantons.

3.0.1 Cantonal Parliaments

Cantonal parliaments serve as the legislative authority within each canton. They are called differently across cantons, including *Kantonsrat*, *Landrat*, *Parlament*, or *Grosser Rat*, with equivalents in other languages such as *Grand Conseil* in French-speaking regions and *Gran Consiglio* in the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino. Although the exact responsibilities of cantonal parliaments vary, their primary function is to enact, amend, and revise legal statutes. Additionally, they are responsible for approving the budget and financial accounts, electing officials such as judges, and overseeing the government and administration (Canton of Bern n.d.; Canton of St Gallen n.d.; Canton of Zurich n.d.).

3.0.2 Electoral Systems

Cantons enjoy a high degree of autonomy in regulating political rights, including the design of the electoral system.[1] As a result, electoral systems vary widely across cantons. Furthermore, these systems are occasionally modified over time, adding another layer of diversity to the electoral landscape.[2]

Voting

Cantonal parliaments consist of between 51 and 204 members[3], elected every three to five years through district-based elections. Electoral districts range from entire cantons (e.g., Geneva and Ticino[4]) to political districts (e.g., Aargau), groups of municipalities (e.g., Bern), individual municipalities (e.g., Zug), or even subunits of a municipality (e.g., the City of Basel in its corresponding canton).

In most cases, members are elected through an open-list proportional representation (PR) system.[5] Voters can cast as many votes as there are seats in their district, selecting candidates individually rather than just voting for a party. They may also mix candidates from different parties (panachage) or allocate two votes to a single candidate (cumulative voting). Alternatively, voters can cast a general party vote without specifying individual candidates or use a combination of both approaches.[6]

The total number of votes received by a party—including both individual candidate

[1] According to Article 39, Paragraph 1 of the Federal Constitution: The Confederation regulates political rights at the federal level, while the cantons handle their regulation at the cantonal and municipal levels.

[2] Changes to cantonal electoral systems typically stem from decisions made by the cantons themselves. However, the Federal Supreme Court has intervened in distinct cases, mandating adjustments. Since the adoption of the revised Federal Constitution in 1999, the Court has taken a more stringent stance on electoral fairness, requiring certain cantons to reform their systems. A key objective has been to ensure that direct and indirect electoral thresholds generally do not exceed 10%. However, exceptions are permitted when justified by significant historical, federalist, cultural, linguistic, or religious factors (Musliu 2018).

[3] Based on the observation period across the 23 cantons included in this study.

[4] In Ticino, parties can choose whether to run a single list for the entire canton or compete with multiple lists across different regions.

[5] In a few districts with a small number of seats, majoritarian electoral rules apply (see Table A1 in the Appendix).

[6] Example: In a district with five seats, a voter may give one vote each to three candidates while allocating the remaining two votes as a general party vote.

votes and general party votes—determines how many seats the party receives. Historically, some cantons[7] have used an alternative system known as *Listenproporz*. Under this method, a party's vote total is used exclusively for seat allocation among parties, while voters also select candidates separately. The candidate votes then determine which individuals within each party are elected.

Seat Allocation Procedures

PR systems require specific rules for translating votes into seats. In our setting, different allocation procedures are used, which can be distinguished by four key characteristics:
(1) Seat allocation formulas: Cantons employ various formulas, including the highest averages methods (D'Hondt and Sainte-Laguë), the largest remainder method (Hare), and the "biproportional" method known as *Doppelter Pukelsheim*.
(2) Alliances: In some cantons, multiple parties can form electoral alliances, which affects how seats are distributed. In such cases, seats are first allocated among alliances before being distributed within each alliance to individual parties. Some cantons also permit suballiances, adding further steps to the allocation process.
(3) Electoral thresholds: Some cantons impose a minimum vote share required to participate in the seat allocation procedure. This vote share applies to either by the party, the alliance, or the suballiance.
(4) Conjoint districts: In certain cases, two or more districts are merged into a single unit for the purposes of seat allocation. Generally, seats are first distributed at the conjoint district level and then assigned to individual districts.

In addition, there exist other canton-specific regulations, such as reserved seats for the French-speaking minority in the Canton of Bern. These various factors contribute to a highly diverse landscape of seat allocation procedures. Table A1 in the Appendix provides a detailed overview of the procedures.

[7]Including Aargau (1949–2001), Lucerne (1951–1967), Solothurn (1949–1993), St. Gallen (1951–1968), and Zug (1950–2006).

3.0.3 Institutional Changes

Female Suffrage

Postal Voting

Voting Age

Smartvote

4 Data

We hand-collect a novel panel dataset comprising election results from 1948 to 2017 for the parliaments of 23 (out of the 26) Swiss cantons.[1] The cantons of Grisons, Appenzell Innerrhoden, and Appenzell Ausserrhoden are excluded as they feature a majoritarian electoral system. Moreover, we exclude districts with majoritarian elections in cantons where both PR and majoritarian voting systems are in place. Our dataset provides comprehensive information on all candidates who participated in these elections, except for a small number of cases where only the elected candidates are known. The information collection was based on official journals, election protocols, electoral documents, and supplemented with newspaper articles where necessary.

4.0.1 Election Level

The dataset encompasses elections in 3'718 district-year combinations. As the cantons are fully autonomous in organizing their electoral districts, the electoral setups differ widely in terms of the number of seats to be allocated and the number of eligible voters. Specifically, the districts are composed of 1 to 100 seats. The number of eligible voters per district ranges from 53 to 243'694 (see Table 4.1).

4.0.2 Individual Level

We observe 196'301 candidates running for 43'109 seats. We have comprehensive information on the candidates, including their first and last name, gender, party affiliation, number of received votes, and their electoral status. For some candidates,

[1] For five cantons data is only available from a later date onwards: Vaud (as of 1962), Obwalden (as of 1974), Nidwalden (as of 1982), Jura (as of 1978), and Uri (as of 1996).

Table 4.1: Summary statistics at the election level

Variable	Observations	Mean	SD	Min	Max
District magnitude	3'718	11.600	11.742	1	100
Number of eligible voters	3'718	15'613.478	22'186.140	53	243'694
Number of eligible voters per seat	3'718	1'328.639	1'118.264	53	7'877

Note: This table shows summary statistics at the election level. The term district magnitude reflects the number of seats assigned to each district

demographic characteristics such as age, place of residence, and occupation are also available.

Based on this information, we can uniquely identify each candidate and monitor their performance over time. Thus, we observe whether or not candidates participated in successive elections and how they performed (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Summary statistics at the individual level

Variable	Observations	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Female	196'231	0.209	0.407	0	1
Age	77'263	44.207	11.784	18	102
Left party[a]	191'894	0.291	0.454	0	1
Right party[b]	191'894	0.395	0.489	0	1
Votes	195'472	2'617.376	4'793.293	2	63'458
Elected	196'301	0.220	0.414	0	1
Succeeding	171'090	0.030	0.170	0	1
Running successive election	182'571	0.399	0.490	0	1
Elected successive election	182'571	0.165	0.371	0	1
Last name's first letter	196'301	11.647	7.112	1	26

Note: This table shows summary statistics at the individual level. The missing values are due to gender-neutral names or if only the candidates' initials are recorded (female), cantons that do not record the year of birth (age), parties not fitting into the left-right spectrum (left party and right party), or the unrecorded votes received by the non-elected candidates (votes). Succeeding, running, and being elected in the successive election are missing for the last period covered per canton. In addition, succeeding is missing for some candidates from the canton of Thurgau, for whom we could not collect the corresponding data, as well as for candidates from the cantons of Aargau, Basel-Stadt, Obwalden, Solothurn, Valais, and Vaud who succeeded but did not participate in the subsequent election.

[a] *As left-wing parties, we consider the Social Democratic Party, the Green Party, and all parties to the left of them in the political spectrum.*

[b] *As right-wing parties, we consider the Liberals, the Swiss People's Party, and all parties positioned to the right of them in the political spectrum.*

5 Research Design

To estimate the causal effects of institutional reforms on the probability of running again in the next election, we employ a difference-in-discontinuities (Diff-in-Disc) design. This approach is particularly well-suited to our setting, as it combines two widely used causal inference methods: regression discontinuity (RD) and difference-in-differences (DiD). The RD component leverages the fact that in close elections, the assignment to winning or losing is effectively random near the electoral threshold. Candidates who narrowly lose are comparable to those who narrowly win, making it possible to estimate the causal effect of losing on future candidacy decisions. The DiD component further strengthens this design by comparing candidates before and after institutional reforms, which were introduced at different times across different jurisdictions. This allows us to control for both time-invariant differences between treated and untreated units and broader temporal trends that might influence electoral participation.

By combining RD with DiD, the Diff-in-Disc design provides a robust strategy to identify the effects of institutional changes on candidate behavior. In particular, it allows us to assess whether reforms such as the introduction of female suffrage and postal voting, the voting age reduction, and smartvote adoption have influenced the likelihood of candidates choosing to run for office again after an electoral defeat. The key advantage of this approach is that it isolates the effects of these institutional changes from other confounding factors, ensuring that the estimated impacts are not simply the result of pre-existing differences between candidates or general trends in electoral behavior. More broadly, by applying this Diff-in-Disc framework across multiple institutional reforms, we aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of how changes in electoral rules shape the long-term trajectories of political candidates.

5.1 Running Variable

A fundamental requirement for RD and Diff-in-Disc designs is a running variable that measures electoral closeness. In majoritarian systems, this is typically the raw votemargin, but in proportional representation (PR) systems, determining a consistent measure is more complex due to the two-stage seat allocation process: first, seats are distributed among parties; second, candidates with the highest vote counts within each party secure those seats luechinger2023. Consequently, electoral closeness can be assessed along two dimensions: (1) the *party margin*, indicating the votes needed for a party to gain or lose a seat, and (2) the *candidate margin*, determining a candidate's ranking within their party. Following luechinger2023, we implement a numerical approach to compute vote margins across various PR seat allocation procedures, including highest average, largest remainder, and biproportional methods. Our implementation accounts for complexities such as electoral thresholds, conjoint districts, and alliance structures.

For each candidate, we calculate the minimum number of exogenous votes required to win or lose a seat. Specifically, we incrementally add votes to a non-elected candidate until they secure a seat and subtract votes from an elected candidate until they lose one. This approach simultaneously affects both the party and candidate margins. The vote margin is then defined as the difference between the actual votes received and the minimum votes required to win a seat:

$$vote\ margin = votes\ received - votes\ required$$

A smaller absolute vote margin indicates a closer electoral outcome. If two candidates receive the same number of votes, and a lottery determines the winner, we adjust their vote margins by ± 1 accordingly.

Note that electoral rules vary across districts, and it might be much harder to receive a seat in a smaller district than in a larger one. The raw vote margins alone may hence not be directly comparable. To ensure comparability, we normalize the vote margin by the number of eligible voters per district:

$$RV_{eligible\ voters} = \frac{vote\ margin}{eligible\ voters\ in\ district}$$

This normalization accounts for variations in district magnitude and seat allocation formulas. Robustness checks with alternative specifications confirm that our key results remain stable. Further discussion on unit selection and alternative normalizations is provided in the Appendix, following insights from Cox et al. (2020).

5.2 Specification

The Diff-in-Disc estimations of three scenarios in our study, namely the introduction of postal voting and smartvote and the lowering of the voting age, differ in nothing but the respective binary treatment indicator of the institutional change. We illustrate our baseline model for the case of postal voting, which allows us to precisely describe in which way the coefficients and interaction terms are to be interpreted. These specifications apply analogously to the estimates of the voting age and smartvote, which we do not repeat at this point.

To estimate the effect of postal voting on candidates' probability of running again, we rely on the following model:

$$\begin{aligned} PR(RunAgain)_{i,c,t+1} = {} & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Lost}_{i,c,t} + \beta_2 \text{PostalVoting}_{c,t} + \beta_3 \text{Female}_i + \beta_4 \text{VoteMargin}_{i,c,t} \\ & + \beta_5 (\text{Lost}_{i,c,t} \times \text{PostalVoting}_{c,t}) + \beta_6 (\text{Lost}_{i,c,t} \times \text{Female}_i) \\ & + \beta_7 (\text{PostalVoting}_{c,t} \times \text{Female}_i) \\ & + \beta_8 (\text{Lost}_{i,c,t} \times \text{PostalVoting}_{c,t} \times \text{Female}_i) \\ & + \sum_{s \subseteq \{\text{Lost,PostalVoting,Female}\}} \beta_s (s \times \text{VoteMargin}_{i,c,t}) \\ & + \sum_c \beta_{16c} (\text{Canton}_c \times \text{Year}_t) + \epsilon_{i,c,t} \end{aligned} \tag{5.1}$$

where $PR(RunAgain)_{i,c,t+1}$ denotes the probability that candidate i in canton c

decides to run again in the next election at time $t + 1$. The binary variable $Lost_{i,c,t}$ indicates whether a candidate narrowly lost the election. $Postal_{c,t}$ indicates whether postal voting was introduced in a given canton c in year y, allowing us to analyse its potential impact on candidate behavior. It represents our treatment indicator and main coefficient of interest. The binary variable $Female_i$ accounts for gender differences, taking a value of one for female candidates and zero otherwise.
The specification also includes several interaction terms to capture heterogeneous treatment effects. The interaction between losing and postal voting, $Lost_{i,c,t}$ x $Postal_{c,t}$, identifies whether postal voting influences the probability of narrowly losing candidates deciding to run again differently in comparison to winning candidates. Similarly, $Lost_{i,c,t}$ x $Female_i$ tests whether female candidates respond differently to a close electoral defeat compared to their male counterparts. The term $Postal_{c,t}$ x $Female_i$ captures whether postal voting itself has a differential impact on female candidates. Finally, the three-way interaction $Lost_{i,c,t}$ x $Postal_{c,t}$ x $Female_i$ reveals whether postal voting disproportionately affects the likelihood of female candidates running again after a close electoral loss.
To account for additional confounding factors, we include $VoteMargin_{i,c,t}$, the running variable the RD setting is based on. [1] The interactions with $VoteMargin_{i,c,t}$ account for potential variation in treatment effects depending on how close the election was. The model further incorporates canton-specific time trends, $\sum_c \beta_{16c}(\text{Canton}_c \times \text{Year}_t)$, to capture unobserved time-varying factors at the cantonal level. Finally, $\varepsilon_{i,c,t}$ represents the error term. With this empirical strategy, we estimate both the direct effect of losing a close election on candidate persistence and the extent to which institutional reforms modify this effect. Specifically, it helps assess whether the introduction of postal voting changes the incentives for candidates to remain politically active and whether these effects differ across gender.

For the introduction of female suffrage, we estimate a slightly different model since our sample is now restricted to male candidates only. For female candidates, we

[1] As outlined in the subsection on the running variable, we normalize the raw vote margin by the number of eligible voters. When using the term VoteMargin throughout the rest of the paper, we always refer to this normalized running variable if not stated differently.

logically do not have observations in the pre-treatment period, which is why we can estimate the effect of this institutional change only for male candidates. The model is specified in equation 5.2:

$$\begin{aligned} PR(RunAgain)_{i,c,t+1} = \beta_0 &+ \beta_1 \text{Lost}_{i,c,t} + \beta_2 \text{FemaleSuffrage}_t + \beta_3 (\text{Lost}_{i,c,t} \times \text{FemaleSuffrage}_{c,t}) \\ &+ \beta_4 \text{VoteMargin}_{i,c,t} \\ &+ \sum_{s \subseteq \{\text{Lost}, \text{FemaleSuffrage}\}} \beta_s (s \times \text{VoteMargin}_{i,c,t}) \\ &+ \sum_c \beta_{8c} (\text{Canton}_c \times \text{Year}_t) + \epsilon_{i,c,t} \end{aligned} \tag{5.2}$$

Our outcome variable of interest is still $PR(RunAgain)_{i,c,t+1}$, and the binary variable $Lost_{i,c,t}$ indicates whether a candidate narrowly lost the election. $\text{FemaleSuffrage}_{c,t}$ now represents our treatment indicator, being equal to 1 if female suffrage was introduced in a canton c at a given time t, and 0 otherwise. The interaction term $Lost_{i,c,t}$ x $FemaleSuffrage_{c,t}$, identifies whether female suffrage influences the probability of running again differently between close electoral losers and winners. Again, we interact the explanatory variables with the running variable $\text{VoteMargin}_{i,c,t}$ to account for potential variation in treatment effects.

Before we estimate the effects of the specific institutional changes, we begin with the overall effect of a close electoral loss on the propensity to run again in the next election. Here, we follow previous literature and employ an RDD, which allows us to identify the causal effect around the electoral threshold. Again, the votemargin serves as the running variable. The model is defined in equation 5.3:

$$\begin{aligned} PR(RunAgain)_{i,c,t+1} = \beta_0 &+ \beta_1 \text{Lost}_{i,c,t} + f_-(\text{VoteMargin}_{i,c,t}) \cdot (1 - \text{Lost}_{i,c,t}) \\ &+ f_+(\text{VoteMargin}_{i,c,t}) \cdot \text{Lost}_{i,c,t} + \epsilon_{i,c,t} \end{aligned} \tag{5.3}$$

For all specifications, we restrict the sample to observations within CER-optimal bandwidths and weight them by a triangular kernel. Additionally, we control for canton-specific time trends.

6 Results

6.1 Results

6.1.1 Overall

Before we focus on institutional changes, we present results for the overall effect of a close electoral loss on the probability of running again in the next election. Table 6.1 shows the corresponding RD estimates. Column 1 is based on all candidates, whereas column 2 is restricted to first-time candidates only. Whereas losing has a significant negative effect of 24.2 percentage points in the entire sample, it amounts up to -28.5 percentage points among first-time candidates. We then split the sample into female and male candidates, respectively. For both, we see the same impacts: a 24.2 pp decline for the entire male or female sample, and an even larger effect among the first-time candidates. We test whether the estimates of the female and male subsets are statistically significant different from another. The corresponding p-values are shown in the last row of table 6.1. Overall, we do not find evidence for gender differences in the probability of running again after losing an election.

Table 6.1: RDD Overall Results: CER-optimal BW

	(1) All Candidates	(2) First-time Candidates
Overall	-0.242	-0.285
	(0.007) ***	(0.013) ***
Bandwidth	0.021	0.012
Observations	43601	11904
Female Candidates	-0.242	-0.302
	(0.017) ***	(0.024) ***
Bandwidth	0.023	0.024
Observations	5727	1562
Male Candidates	-0.242	-0.298
	(0.008) ***	(0.014) ***
Bandwidth	0.022	0.013
Observations	37873	10341
Gender difference (p-value)	0	-0.003
	(0.992)	(0.905)

6.1.2 Female Suffrage

The diff-in-disc estimates for the introduction of female suffrage are displayed in table 6.2. Again, we present two models, one for all candidates in column 1, and one for first-time candidates in column 2. The effect of losing is similar to the overall RD estimate discussed in section 6.1.1, namely a 24.5 pp decrease for all candidates and a 27.1 pp decrease for first-time candidates. Remarkably, the introduction of female suffrage increases the probability of running by roughly 6 pp among the entire sample and 7.3pp among first-timers. We do not find evidence for a heterogenous treatment effect between electoral winners and losers for all candidates, but for first-time candidates: For candidates who have lost the previous election, the effect of female suffrage is a bit lower. To be precise, the corresponding coefficient is at -0.044, and statistically significant at the 10%-level.

Table 6.2: Difference-in-Discontinuities Estimates Female Suffrage with Canton-Specific Time Trends among Male Candidates

	Dependent variable:	
	Run Again in Next Election	
	All Candidates	First-time Candidates
	(1)	(2)
Lost	-0.245^{***}	-0.271^{***}
	(0.026)	(0.028)
Female Suffrage	0.059^{***}	0.073^{***}
	(0.021)	(0.025)
Lost x Female Suffrage	-0.001	-0.044^{*}
	(0.019)	(0.025)
Constant	7.554^{***}	6.069^{***}
	(0.605)	(0.687)
Observations	70,544	24,789
R^2	0.091	0.124
Adjusted R^2	0.091	0.123
Residual Std. Error	0.473 (df = 70513)	0.465 (df = 24758)
F Statistic	235.877^{***} (df = 30; 70513)	116.669^{***} (df = 30; 24758)
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
		Standard errors clustered at canton level

6.1.3 Postal Voting

Table 6.3 summarizes the diff-in-disc results for postal voting. Again, we find a significant negative effect of losing on the likelihood to run again. The introduction of postal voting has no significant effect in general. Among losing candidates, however, it leads to a 7pp increase in the probability of running again. For first-time candidates, the estimated effect also amounts up to 6.3pp but is not statistically significant anymore. We do not find evidence for any gender differences.

Table 6.3: Difference-in-Discontinuities Estimates Postal Voting with Gender Interaction and Canton-Specific Time Trends

	Dependent variable:	
	Run Again in Next Election	
	All Candidates	First-time Candidates
	(1)	(2)
Lost	-0.270^{***}	-0.316^{***}
	(0.021)	(0.030)
Postal	-0.005	-0.036
	(0.023)	(0.030)
Female	0.019	-0.032
	(0.020)	(0.035)
Lost x Postal	0.070^{**}	0.063
	(0.027)	(0.039)
Lost x Female	-0.021	0.038
	(0.023)	(0.038)
Postal x Female	-0.044	-0.027
	(0.028)	(0.043)
Lost x Postal x Female	-0.006	-0.054
	(0.037)	(0.051)
Constant	7.379^{***}	5.034^{***}
	(0.587)	(0.543)
Observations	85,338	27,729
R^2	0.092	0.125
Adjusted R^2	0.092	0.123
Residual Std. Error	0.470 (df = 85299)	0.463 (df = 27690)
F Statistic	227.772^{***} (df = 38; 85299)	103.733^{***} (df = 38; 27690)
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
		Standard errors clustered at canton level

6.1.4 Vote Age

We present diff-in-disc results for the lowering of the voting age in table 6.4. In this estimation, a voting age of 19 or 20 is our baseline scenario, and the indicator variable *Vote Age 18* represents our treatment variable. I.e., it is equal to 1 if the voting age was lowered from 19/20 to 18, and 0 otherwise. We find a statistically significant positive effect of 4.8pp among all candidates. Put differently, lowering the voting age to 18 increases candidates' probability of running again by 4.8pp. Note that this effect decreases to 2.2pp for first-time candidates and it is not statistically significant anymore. For the entire sample, the positive effect is even higher for losing candidates: The effect is increased by 4.2pp. Interestingly, we find some significant gender differences in this scenario. First, the negative effect of losing is even larger for female candidates. Second, the original positive effect of lowering the voting age to 18 appears to be reversed into a negative effect for female candidates. The coefficient of the interaction term *Vote Age 18* x *Female* is at -0.077. In sum, female candidates' likelihood to run again is thus negatively affected by the lowering of the voting age.

Table 6.4: Difference-in-Discontinuities Estimates Voting Age with Gender Interaction and Canton-specific Time Trends

	Dependent variable:	
	Run Again in Next Election	
	All Candidates	First-time Candidates
	(1)	(2)
Lost	-0.263^{***}	-0.299^{***}
	(0.026)	(0.032)
Vote Age 18	0.048^{***}	0.022
	(0.018)	(0.018)
Female	0.049	-0.014
	(0.030)	(0.058)
Lost x Vote Age 18	0.042^{*}	0.017
	(0.025)	(0.032)
Lost x Female	-0.067^{**}	-0.051
	(0.034)	(0.057)
Vote Age 18 x Female	-0.077^{**}	-0.043
	(0.032)	(0.072)
Lost x Vote Age 18 x Female	0.060^{*}	0.083
	(0.034)	(0.078)
Constant	9.430^{***}	6.009^{***}
	(0.995)	(1.039)
Observations	86,223	27,857
R^2	0.094	0.125
Adjusted R^2	0.093	0.124
Residual Std. Error	0.470 (df = 86184)	0.463 (df = 27818)
F Statistic	233.964^{***} (df = 38; 86184)	104.608^{***} (df = 38; 27818)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Standard errors clustered at canton level

6.1.5 Smart Vote

Results of the diff-in-disc estimates for the introduction of smartvote are displayed in table 6.5. Among all candidates, we find a highly significant negative effect of the introduction of smartvote on the probability of running again. To be precise, we estimate a 15.6pp decrease. For first-time candidates, the estimate is -0.120 but loses its statistical significance. Notably, female first-time candidates are 6pp less likely to run again according to the estimate in column 2. The negative effect of smartvote is slightly smaller among electoral losers, as the positive coefficient of the interaction term *Lost* x *Smartvote* indicates. There do not exist any heterogenous treatment effects of smartvote among female and male candidates.

Table 6.5: Difference-in-Discontinuities Estimates Smartvote with Canton-Specific Time Trends

	Dependent variable:	
	Run Again in Next Election	
	All Candidates	First-time Candidates
	(1)	(2)
Lost	-0.256^{***}	-0.302^{***}
	(0.019)	(0.027)
Smartvote	-0.156^{***}	-0.120
	(0.060)	(0.085)
Female	-0.002	-0.060^{***}
	(0.013)	(0.022)
Lost x Smartvote	0.093^{***}	0.078
	(0.034)	(0.054)
Lost x Female	-0.029	0.016
	(0.018)	(0.025)
Smartvote x Female	-0.039	0.014
	(0.034)	(0.033)
Lost x Smartvote x Female	0.039	0.002
	(0.051)	(0.078)
Constant	4.292^{***}	2.961^{***}
	(0.951)	(1.058)
Observations	85,338	27,729
R^2	0.095	0.127
Adjusted R^2	0.095	0.125
Residual Std. Error	0.470 (df = 85299)	0.463 (df = 27690)
F Statistic	235.497^{***} (df = 38; 85299)	105.598^{***} (df = 38; 27690)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Standard errors clustered at canton level

6.1.6 Summary of Results

6.2 Robustness Checks

6.2.1 Different Bandwidths

- MSE and half MSE optimal bandwidths - Wasserman-Bandwidhts - Different specifications of running variable

7 Discussion

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A Appendix

A.1 Electoral Systems

[1] Majority in Bettingen (since 1950)

Table A1: Particularities of the electoral systems

Canton	Years	Districts	Parliament size	Seat allocation formula	Listen-proporz	Alliances	Sub-alliances	Subsub-alliances	Ersatz-männer	Conjoint districts	Electoral threshold	Special aspects
AG	1949	11	193	D'Hondt	✓	✓	✓				Full seat for the alliance and the suballiance	
AG	1953-1985	11	200	D'Hondt	✓	✓	✓				Full seat for the alliance and the suballiance	
AG	1989-2001	11	200	D'Hondt	✓	✓	✓				Full seat for the alliance	
AG	2005	11	140	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
AG	2009	11	140	Biproportional								
AG	since 2013	11	140	Biproportional							5% in one district or 3% in the canton	
BE	1950	31	194	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
BE	1954-1978	31	200	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
BE	1982-1990	28	200	D'Hondt		✓	✓	✓		✓		
BE	1994-2002	27	200	D'Hondt		✓	✓	✓		✓		
BE	2006	8	160	D'Hondt		✓	✓					Guaranteed seats for French-speaking population in Biel
BE	since 2010	9	160	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
BL	1950-1979	7	80	D'Hondt								
BL	1983-1991	11	84	D'Hondt						✓		
BL	since 1995	12	90	D'Hondt						✓		
BS	1950-1992	5	130	D'Hondt/Majority[1]		✓						
BS	1996-2008	5	130	D'Hondt/Majority[1]		✓					5% in one district	
BS	since 2012	5	100	Sainte-Laguë/Majority[1]							4%	
FR	1951-1956	8	131	Hare-Nimeyer							15%	
FR	1961	8	130	Hare-Nimeyer							15%	
FR	1966	8	130	Hare-Nimeyer		✓					10%	
FR	1971-1996	8	130	Hare-Nimeyer		✓					7.5% for the alliance	
FR	2001	8	130	D'Hondt								
FR	since 2006	8	110	D'Hondt								
GE	since 1951	1	100	D'Hondt		✓					7%	

[2]Majority in Bilten (1950-1959), Elm (1950-1959), Braunwald (1950-1986), Matt (1950-1986), Kerenzen (1950, 1956), Rüti (1950, 1962-1986), Haslen (1950, 1971-1986), Engi (1982-1986)

Canton	Years	Districts	Parliament size	Seat allocation formula	Listen-proporz	Alliances	Sub-alliances	Subsub-alliances	Ersatz-männer	Conjoint districts	Electoral threshold	Special aspects
GL	1950	20	68	D'Hondt/Majority[2]		✓	✓					
GL	1953-1959	20	76	D'Hondt/Majority[2]		✓	✓					
GL	1962-1968	20	81	D'Hondt/Majority[2]		✓	✓					
GL	1971-1978	20	77	D'Hondt/Majority[2]		✓	✓					
GL	1982-1986	20	80	D'Hondt/Majority[2]		✓	✓					
GL	1990-2006	14	80	D'Hondt/Majority[2]		✓	✓					
GL	since 2010	3	60	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
JU	since 1978	3	60	D'Hondt								
LU	1951	6	167	D'Hondt	✓	✓			✓		$votes \geq 0.75 \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	Allocation of remainder seats
LU	1955-1959	6	168	D'Hondt	✓	✓			✓		$votes \geq 0.75 \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	Allocation of remainder seats
LU	1963	6	120	D'Hondt	✓	✓			✓		$votes \geq 0.75 \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	Allocation of remainder seats
LU	1967	6	120	D'Hondt	✓	✓					$votes \geq 0.75 \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	Allocation of remainder seats
LU	1971-1983	6	170	D'Hondt		✓						
LU	1987-1995	6	170	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
LU	1999-2007	6	120	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
LU	since 2011	6	120	D'Hondt		✓	✓			✓		
NE	1949	6	107	D'Hondt		✓					10% for the alliance	
NE	1953	6	110	D'Hondt		✓					10% for the alliance	
NE	1957	6	117	D'Hondt		✓					10% for the alliance	
NE	since 1961	6	115	D'Hondt		✓					10% for the alliance	
NW	1982-2010	11	60	D'Hondt								
NW	since 2014	11	60	Biproportional								
OW	1974-1978	7	51	Majority								
OW	1982	7	52	Majority								
OW	1986	7	52	D'Hondt								
OW	1990-2002	7	55	D'Hondt								
OW	since 2006	7	55	D'Hondt		✓						

[3] Majority in Buchberg-Rüdlingen (1956-2004)

[4] Majority in Alpthal (1948-2012), Illgau (1948-2012), Innerthal (1948-2012), Lauerz (1948-2012), Morschach (1948-2012), Oberiberg (1948-2012), Riemenstalden (1948-2012), Rothenthurm (1948-2012), Sattel (1948-2012), Steinerberg (1948-2012), Vorderthal (1948-2012), Unteriberg (1964-2012), Reichenburg (1988-1972), Gersau (1984-2012)

[5] Majority in Andermatt, Bauen, Gurtnellen, Göschenen, Hospental, Isenthal, Realp, Seelisberg, Sisikon, Spiringen, Unterschächen, Wassen (since 1996)

[6] Majority in Goms (1953)

[7] Majority in Steinhausen (1950-1970), Hünenberg (1950-1978), Neuheim (1950-2006I), Walchwil (1950-2006)

Canton	Years	Districts	Parliament size	Seat allocation formula	List-proporz	Alliances	Sub-alliances	Subsub-alliances	Ersatz-männer	Conjoint districts	Electoral threshold	Special aspects
SG	1951	14	191	D'Hondt	✓				✓		$votes \geq 0.75 \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	Allocation of remainder seats
SG	1954-1960	14	193	D'Hondt	✓				✓		$votes \geq 0.75 \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	Allocation of remainder seats
SG	1964-1968	14	204	D'Hondt	✓				✓		$votes \geq 0.75 \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	Allocation of remainder seats
SG	1972-1988	14	180	D'Hondt		✓						
SG	1992-2000	14	180	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
SG	2004	8	180	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
SG	since 2008	8	120	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
SH	1956-1962	6	82	D'Hondt/Majority[3]		✓	✓					
SH	1964-2004	6	80	D'Hondt/Majority[3]		✓	✓					
SH	since 2008	6	60	Biproportional								
SO	1949	10	130	D'Hondt	✓							Allocation of remainder seats
SO	1953-1957	10	142	D'Hondt	✓							Allocation of remainder seats
SO	1961-1965	10	144	D'Hondt	✓							Allocation of remainder seats
SO	1969-1993	10	144	D'Hondt	✓						$votes \geq \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	Allocation of remainder seats
SO	1997-2001	10	144	D'Hondt		✓						
SO	since 2005	5	100	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
SZ	1948	30	99	D'Hondt/Majority[4]								If a list receives more seats t
SZ	1952-1960	30	105	D'Hondt/Majority[4]								there are candidates on this l
SZ	1964-2012	30	100	D'Hondt/Majority[4]								other lists get the seats.
SZ	since 2016	30	100	Biproportional							1% in the canton	
TG	1953	8	124	D'Hondt		✓						
TG	1956	8	125	D'Hondt		✓						
TG	1959	8	124	D'Hondt		✓						
TG	1962	8	125	D'Hondt		✓						
TG	1965	8	126	D'Hondt		✓						
TG	1968	8	129	D'Hondt		✓						
TG	1972-1980	8	130	D'Hondt		✓						
TG	1984-2008	8	130	D'Hondt		✓	✓					
TG	since 2012	5	130	D'Hondt		✓	✓					

Canton	Years	Districts	Parliament size	Seat allocation formula	Listen-proporz	Alliances	Sub-alliances	Subsub-alliances	Ersatz-männer	Conjoint districts	Electoral threshold	Special aspects
TI	1951-1967	1	65	Hare		✓					for the alliance: $votes \geq \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates}$	The district can be divided
TI	since 1971	1	90	Hare		✓					for the alliance: $votes \geq \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates}$	The district can be divided
UR	since 1996	19	64	D'Hondt/Majority[5]		✓						
VD	1962-1970	30	197	D'Hondt		✓					5%	
VD	1974-1994	30	200	D'Hondt		✓					5%	
VD	1998-2002	21	180	Hare		✓				✓	5%	
VD	since 2007	13	150	Hare		✓				✓	5%	
VS	1949	14	131	D'Hondt							15%	
VS	1953-1969	14	130	D'Hondt/Majority[6]							10%	
VS	1973-1981	14	130	D'Hondt							10% and $votes \geq \frac{\Sigma\ votes}{mandates+1}$	
VS	1985-2013	14	130	D'Hondt							8%	
VS	since 2017	14	130	Biproportional							8% in one district	Districts are divided
ZG	1950	11	78	D'Hondt/Majority[7]	✓							Allocation of remainder seats
ZG	1954-1958	11	77	D'Hondt/Majority[7]	✓							Allocation of remainder seats
ZG	1962	11	78	D'Hondt/Majority[7]	✓							Allocation of remainder seats
ZG	1966-1970	11	78	D'Hondt/Majority[7]	✓							
ZG	1974-2006	11	80	D'Hondt/Majority[7]	✓							
ZG	2010	11	80	D'Hondt								
ZG	since 2014	11	80	Biproportional							5% in one district or 3% in the canton	
ZH	1951-2003	18	180	D'Hondt		✓						
ZH	since 2007	18	180	Biproportional							5% in one district	

A.2 Robustness Checks

A.2.1 Sample Variations

In the following, we restrict the data to a subsample containing only observations where female suffrage is available. We apply the same diff-in-disc estimations as in the main section.

Table A.2: Difference-in-Discontinuities Estimates Postal Voting with Canton-Specific Time Trends across elections with female suffrage

	Dependent variable:	
	Run Again in Next Election	
	All Candidates	First-time Candidates
	(1)	(2)
Lost	-0.285^{***}	-0.356^{***}
	(0.020)	(0.038)
Postal	0.001	-0.041
	(0.021)	(0.039)
Female	-0.006	-0.044
	(0.021)	(0.029)
Lost x Postal	0.087^{***}	0.107^{***}
	(0.025)	(0.041)
Lost x Female	-0.001	0.044
	(0.022)	(0.030)
Postal x Female	-0.018	-0.011
	(0.025)	(0.043)
Lost x Postal x Female	-0.031	-0.061
	(0.034)	(0.049)
Constant	10.089^{***}	7.874^{***}
	(1.110)	(1.043)
Observations	68,334	23,484
R^2	0.087	0.122
Adjusted R^2	0.087	0.121
Residual Std. Error	0.467 (df = 68295)	0.458 (df = 23445)
F Statistic	171.389^{***} (df = 38; 68295)	85.988^{***} (df = 38; 23445)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Standard errors clustered at canton level

Table A.3: Difference-in-Discontinuities Estimates Voting Age with Gender Interaction and Canton-specific Time Trends for elections with female suffrage

	Dependent variable:	
	Run Again in Next Election	
	All Candidates	First-time Candidates
	(1)	(2)
Lost	-0.284^{***}	-0.356^{***}
	(0.028)	(0.043)
Vote Age 18	0.053^{***}	0.013
	(0.016)	(0.023)
Female	0.011	-0.057
	(0.033)	(0.051)
Lost x Vote Age 18	0.068^{**}	0.081^{**}
	(0.028)	(0.038)
Lost x Female	-0.048	-0.012
	(0.037)	(0.055)
Vote Age 18 x Female	-0.036	0.009
	(0.033)	(0.068)
Lost x Vote Age 18 x Female	0.036	0.033
	(0.036)	(0.077)
Constant	13.416^{***}	9.890^{***}
	(1.131)	(1.136)
Observations	68,485	23,670
R^2	0.090	0.123
Adjusted R^2	0.089	0.122
Residual Std. Error	0.467 (df = 68446)	0.458 (df = 23631)
F Statistic	177.706^{***} (df = 38; 68446)	87.420^{***} (df = 38; 23631)

Note: This table reports robust RD estimates of a specification with the dependent variable whether a candidate runs again for office in the next election. We run the analyses separately for two scenarios: post and pre smartvote introduction. In Model (1), we present results for the full sample. In Model (2), we restrict the sample to male candidates and in model (3) to female candidates only. Additionally, we analyse differences in coefficients, across scenarios for each model and between male and female candidates within a specific scenario. In all specifications, we use CER-optimal bandwidths. Robust Standard Errors clustered at canton level are reported in parentheses. Vote Age 19-20 is reference group. Only observations with $female_suffrage = 1$.

$Significancelevel : ***p¡0.01, **p¡0.05, *p¡0.1.$

Table A.4: Difference-in-Discontinuities Estimates Smartvote with Canton-Specific Time Trends across elections with female suffrage

	Dependent variable:	
	Run Again in Next Election	
	All Candidates	First-time Candidates
	(1)	(2)
Lost	-0.264^{***}	-0.319^{***}
	(0.017)	(0.029)
Smartvote	-0.171^{***}	-0.128
	(0.065)	(0.088)
Female	-0.014	-0.062^{***}
	(0.015)	(0.018)
Lost x Smartvote	0.107^{***}	0.084^{*}
	(0.030)	(0.050)
Lost x Female	-0.020	0.022
	(0.017)	(0.022)
Smartvote x Female	-0.019	0.038
	(0.030)	(0.029)
Lost x Smartvote x Female	0.018	-0.022
	(0.044)	(0.071)
Constant	4.581^{***}	3.831^{***}
	(1.401)	(1.257)
Observations	68,334	23,484
R^2	0.090	0.124
Adjusted R^2	0.089	0.123
Residual Std. Error	0.467 (df = 68295)	0.457 (df = 23445)
F Statistic	176.988^{***} (df = 38; 68295)	87.631^{***} (df = 38; 23445)

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Standard errors clustered at canton level

A.2.2 Alternative Bandwidths

A.2.3 RDD Estimations

Table A.5: RDD Results Postal Voting: CER-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
With postal voting	-0.21	-0.201	-0.23	-0.03
	(0.011) ***	(0.013) ***	(0.022) ***	(0.261)
Bandwidth	0.024	0.023	0.024	
Observations	20994	17078	3916	
Without postal voting	-0.27	-0.272	-0.252	0.02
	(0.009) ***	(0.009) ***	(0.027) ***	(0.498)
Bandwidth	0.025	0.027	0.021	
Observations	22607	20795	1811	
Difference	0.06	0.071	0.021	
	(0.000) ***	(0.000) ***	(0.555)	

Table A.6: RDD Results Vote Age: CER-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
Vote Age 18	-0.227	-0.227	-0.222	-0.005
	(0.01) ***	(0.012) ***	(0.019) ***	(0.829)
Bandwidth	0.026	0.026	0.024	
Observations	20241	15690	4550	
Vote Age 19-20	-0.264	-0.26	-0.324	0.065
	(0.009) ***	(0.009) ***	(0.032) ***	(0.0627)
Bandwidth	0.023	0.026	0.029	
Observations	23240	22080	1160	
Difference (18-19/20)	0.037	0.033	0.103	
	(0.00757) **	(0.032) *	(0.00825) **	

Table A.7: RDD Results Smart Vote: CER-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
With smartvote	-0.159	-0.159	-0.153	0.006
	(0.017) ***	(0.02) ***	(0.035) ***	(0.889)
Bandwidth	0.028	0.031	0.02	
Observations	5269	3792	1477	
Without smartvote	-0.256	-0.255	-0.265	-0.01
	(0.007) ***	(0.008) ***	(0.02) ***	(0.643)
Bandwidth	0.023	0.025	0.022	
Observations	38332	34081	4250	
Difference	0.097	0.096	0.113	
	(0.000) ***	(0.000) ***	(0.00849) **	

Note: This table reports robust RD estimates of a specification with the dependent variable whether a candidate runs again for office in the next election. We run the analyses separately for two scenarios: post and pre smartvote introduction. In Model (1), we present results for the full sample. In Model (2), we restrict the sample to male candidates and in model (3) to female candidates only. Additionally, we analyse differences in coefficients, across scenarios for each model and between male and female candidates within a specific scenario. In all specifications, we use CER-optimal bandwidths. Robust Standard Errors are reported in parentheses (except for the difference coefficients, where p-values are given).
*Significance level: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.*

A.2.4 First-time Candidates - RDD Estimations

Wasserman-bandwidths

A.2.5 Running variable = raw votemargin

Table A.8: RDD Results Overall: (Half) MSE-optimal BW

	(1) All Candidates	(2) First-time Candidates
(A) MSE-optimal BW		
Overall	-0.253	-0.313
	(0.006) ***	(0.01) ***
Bandwidth	0.04	0.021
Observations	43600	11903
Female Candidates	-0.255	-0.318
	(0.014) ***	(0.021) ***
Bandwidth	0.038	0.04
Observations	5727	1562
Male Candidates	-0.251	-0.32
	(0.006) ***	(0.011) ***
Bandwidth	0.041	0.024
Observations	37873	10341
Gender difference	-0.004	0.002
(p-value)	(0.829)	(0.938)
(B) Half MSE-optimal BW		
Overall	-0.241	-0.311
	(0.007) ***	(0.011) ***
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02
Observations	43600	11903
Male Candidates	-0.242	-0.315
	(0.008) ***	(0.012) ***
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02
Observations	37873	10341
Female Candidates	-0.237	-0.292
	(0.018) ***	(0.026) ***
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02
Observations	5727	1562
Gender difference	-0.005	-0.024
(p-value)	(0.864)	(0.553)

*Note: This table reports robust RD estimates of a specification with the dependent variable whether a candidate runs again for office in the next election. In Model (1), we present results for the full sample. In Model (2), we restrict the sample to first-time candidates. Additionally, we analyse differences in coefficients between male and female candidates for both samples. Robust Standard Errors are reported in parentheses (except for the difference coefficients, where p-values are given). Significance level: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.*

Table A.9: RDD Results Postal Voting: (Half) MSE-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
(A) MSE-optimal BW				
With postal voting	-0.224	-0.214	-0.235	-0.021
	(0.009) ***	(0.01) ***	(0.018) ***	(0.357)
Bandwidth	0.042	0.039	0.04	
Observations	20994	17078	3916	
Without postal voting	-0.281	-0.279	-0.279	0
	(0.007) ***	(0.007) ***	(0.023) ***	(0.993)
Bandwidth	0.045	0.048	0.034	
Observations	22607	20795	1811	
Difference	0.057	0.065	0.044	
	(0.000) ***	(0.000) ***	(0.175)	
(B) Half MSE-optimal BW				
With postal voting	-0.207	-0.198	-0.227	-0.028
	(0.012) ***	(0.014) ***	(0.024) ***	(0.472)
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02	0.02	
Observations	20994	17078	3916	
Without postal voting	-0.266	-0.269	-0.247	0.022
	(0.01) ***	(0.01) ***	(0.027) ***	(0.594)
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02	0.02	
Observations	22607	20795	1811	
Difference	0.059	0.071	0.02	
	(0.00706) **	(0.00388) **	(0.689)	

Note: This table reports robust RD estimates of a specification with the dependent variable whether a candidate runs again for office in the next election. We run the analyses separately for two scenarios: with postal voting and without postal voting. In Model (1), we present results for the full sample. In Model (2), we restrict the sample to male candidates and in model (3) to female candidates only. Additionally, we analyse differences in coefficients, across scenarios for each model and between male and female candidates within a specific scenario. Robust Standard Errors are reported in parentheses (except for the difference coefficients, where p-values are given).
*Significance level: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.*

Table A.10: RDD Results Vote Age Groups: (Half) MSE-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
(A) MSE-optimal BW				
Vote Age 18	-0.237	-0.236	-0.233	-0.003
	(0.008) ***	(0.009) ***	(0.016) ***	(0.873)
Bandwidth	0.046	0.045	0.04	
Observations	20241	15690	4550	
Vote Age 19-20	-0.272	-0.267	-0.336	0.069
	(0.008) ***	(0.008) ***	(0.027) ***	(0.0269) *
Bandwidth	0.041	0.045	0.046	
Observations	23240	22080	1160	
Difference (18-19/20)	0.035	0.031	0.104	
	(0.00436) **	(0.0196) *	(0.00309) **	
(B) Half MSE-optimal BW				
Vote Age 18	-0.219	-0.221	-0.213	-0.008
	(0.011) ***	(0.013) ***	(0.021) ***	(0.809)
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02	0.02	
Observations	20241	15690	4550	
Vote Age 19-20	-0.264	-0.26	-0.309	0.049
	(0.01) ***	(0.011) ***	(0.038) ***	(0.367)
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02	0.02	
Observations	23240	22080	1160	
Difference (18-19/20)	0.045	0.038	0.096	
	(0.036) *	(0.111)	(0.111)	

Note: This table reports robust RD estimates of a specification with the dependent variable whether a candidate runs again for office in the next election. We run the analyses separately for three scenarios depending on the vote age group. In Model (1), we present results for the full sample. In Model (2), we restrict the sample to male candidates and in model (3) to female candidates only. Additionally, we analyse differences in coefficients, across scenarios for each model and between male and female candidates within a specific scenario. Robust Standard Errors are reported in parentheses (except for the difference coefficients, where p-values are given).
*Significance level: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.*

Table A.11: RDD Results Smartvote: (Half) MSE-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
(A) MSE-optimal BW				
With smartvote	-0.16	-0.161	-0.155	0.007
	(0.014) ***	(0.017) ***	(0.029) ***	(0.865)
Bandwidth	0.048	0.052	0.032	
Observations	5269	3792	1477	
Without smartvote	-0.267	-0.264	-0.284	-0.02
	(0.006) ***	(0.006) ***	(0.016) ***	(0.301)
Bandwidth	0.043	0.046	0.037	
Observations	38332	34081	4250	
Difference	0.107	0.103	0.129	
	(0.000) ***	(0.000) ***	(0.000) ***	
(B) Half MSE-optimal BW				
With smartvote	-0.159	-0.161	-0.152	0.009
	(0.02) ***	(0.024) ***	(0.036) *	(0.89)
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02	0.02	
Observations	5269	3792	1477	
Without smartvote	-0.254	-0.253	-0.259	-0.006
	(0.008) ***	(0.009) ***	(0.021) *	(0.846)
Bandwidth	0.02	0.02	0.02	
Observations	38332	34081	4250	
Difference	0.095	0.092	0.107	
	(0.00223) **	(0.0132) *	(0.0705)	

Note: This table reports robust RD estimates of a specification with the dependent variable whether a candidate runs again for office in the next election. We run the analyses separately for two scenarios: post and pre smartvote introduction. In Model (1), we present results for the full sample. In Model (2), we restrict the sample to male candidates and in model (3) to female candidates only. Additionally, we analyse differences in coefficients, across scenarios for each model and between male and female candidates within a specific scenario. In all specifications, we use MSE-optimal bandwidths. Robust Standard Errors are reported in parentheses (except for the difference coefficients, where p-values are given).
*Significance level: *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1.*

Table A.12: RDD Results Postal Voting among First-time Candidates: (Half) MSE- & CER-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
(A) MSE-optimal BW				
With postal voting	-0.296	-0.3	-0.285	0.015
	(0.015) ***	(0.017) ***	(0.029) ***	(0.682)
Bandwidth	0.028	0.031	0.034	
Observations	5361	4404	957	
Without postal voting	-0.342	-0.352	-0.329	0.023
	(0.012) ***	(0.012) ***	(0.036) ***	(0.586)
Bandwidth	0.026	0.031	0.025	
Observations	6543	5937	605	
Difference	0.046	0.052	0.045	
	(0.0234) *	(0.0175) *	(0.378)	
(B) Half MSE-optimal BW				
With postal voting	-0.259	-0.252	-0.264	-0.011
	(0.023) ***	(0.027) ***	(0.045) **	(0.881)
Bandwidth	0.011	0.011	0.011	
Observations	5361	4404	957	
Without postal voting	-0.294	-0.305	-0.237	0.067
	(0.017) ***	(0.018) ***	(0.05) **	(0.377)
Bandwidth	0.011	0.011	0.011	
Observations	6543	5937	605	
Difference	0.035	0.053	-0.026	
	(0.396)	(0.26)	(0.787)	
(C) CER-optimal BW				
With postal voting	-0.278	-0.279	-0.279	0
	(0.019) ***	(0.021) ***	(0.035) ***	(0.994)
Bandwidth	0.016	0.018	0.021	
Observations	5361	4404	957	
Without postal voting	-0.318	-0.333	-0.282	0.051
	(0.015) ***	(0.015) ***	(0.042) ***	(0.274)
Bandwidth	0.015	0.018	0.016	
Observations	6543	5937	605	
Difference	0.04	0.054	0.003	
	(0.1)	(0.0382) *	(0.954)	

Table A.13: RDD Results Vote Age Groups among First-time Candidates: (Half) MSE- & CER-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
(A) MSE-optimal BW				
Vote Age 18	-0.305	-0.322	-0.294	-0.028
	(0.015) ***	(0.017) ***	(0.024) ***	(0.379)
Bandwidth	0.025	0.029	0.044	
Observations	4867	3723	1143	
Vote Age 19-20	-0.338	-0.336	-0.383	0.047
	(0.012) ***	(0.012) ***	(0.043) ***	(0.336)
Bandwidth	0.03	0.032	0.025	
Observations	7020	6601	419	
Difference (18-19/20)	0.034	0.014	0.089	
	(0.0929)	(0.53)	(0.0986)	
(B) Half MSE-optimal BW				
Vote Age 18	-0.267	-0.289	-0.22	-0.069
	(0.021) ***	(0.026) ***	(0.04) *	(0.312)
Bandwidth	0.011	0.011	0.011	
Observations	4867	3723	1143	
Vote Age 19-20	-0.295	-0.288	-0.345	0.057
	(0.018) ***	(0.018) ***	(0.059) ***	(0.506)
Bandwidth	0.011	0.011	0.011	
Observations	7020	6601	419	
Difference (18-19/20)	0.028	-0.001	0.126	
	(0.484)	(1)	(0.211)	
(C) CER-optimal BW				
Vote Age 18	-0.285	-0.308	-0.277	-0.031
	(0.018) ***	(0.021) ***	(0.028) ***	(0.386)
Bandwidth	0.015	0.017	0.027	
Observations	4867	3723	1143	
Vote Age 19-20	-0.318	-0.316	-0.364	0.048
	(0.015) ***	(0.015) ***	(0.05) ***	(0.377)
Bandwidth	0.017	0.019	0.016	
Observations	7020	6601	419	
Difference (18-19/20)	0.033	0.008	0.087	
	(0.169)	(0.766)	(0.146)	

Table A.14: RDD Results Smartvote among First-time Candidates: (Half) MSE- & CER-optimal BW

	(1) Overall	(2) Male	(3) Female	Gender Difference
(A) MSE-optimal BW				
With smartvote	-0.254	-0.269	-0.219	0.051
	(0.032) ***	(0.037) ***	(0.057) ***	(0.503)
Bandwidth	0.025	0.027	0.024	
Observations	878	615	263	
Without smartvote	-0.323	-0.329	-0.342	-0.013
	(0.011) ***	(0.011) ***	(0.022) ***	(0.608)
Bandwidth	0.023	0.026	0.042	
Observations	11026	9726	1299	
Difference	0.069	0.059	0.123	
	(0.0609)	(0.162)	(0.0683)	
(B) Half MSE-optimal BW				
With smartvote	-0.242	-0.258	-0.204	0.054
	(0.043) ***	(0.051) ***	(0.075)	(0.688)
Bandwidth	0.011	0.011	0.011	
Observations	878	615	263	
Without smartvote	-0.285	-0.29	-0.262	0.028
	(0.015) ***	(0.016) ***	(0.036)	(0.634)
Bandwidth	0.011	0.011	0.011	
Observations	11026	9726	1299	
Difference	0.042	0.032	0.058	
	(0.514)	(0.679)	(0.641)	
(C) CER-optimal BW				
With smartvote	-0.251	-0.271	-0.216	0.054
	(0.037) ***	(0.043) ***	(0.065) **	(0.506)
Bandwidth	0.015	0.017	0.015	
Observations	878	615	263	
Without smartvote	-0.298	-0.309	-0.323	-0.014
	(0.013) ***	(0.014) ***	(0.026) **	(0.631)
Bandwidth	0.013	0.015	0.026	
Observations	11026	9726	1299	
Difference	0.047	0.038	0.107	
	(0.251)	(0.415)	(0.145)	

Table A.15: (Fixed Effects) OLS with Wasserman-bandwidths

	Dependent variable:							
	Run again anytime							Run again in next election
	Women Only	Men Only			All candidates			First-time candidates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Loss margin	0.265	−0.067	−0.067	0.027	−0.019	−0.044	−0.106	−0.090
	(0.219)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.069)	(0.114)	(0.034)	(0.115)	(0.073)
Lost	−0.376***	−0.332***	−0.332***	−0.352***	−0.298***	−0.302***	−0.439***	−0.440***
	(0.013)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.012)	(0.018)	(0.013)
Female			−0.022***	−0.028***	−0.066***	−0.030***	−0.088***	−0.052***
			(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.015)	(0.012)
Loss margin × lost	0.258	0.133	0.133	0.024	0.063	0.098	0.145	0.138
	(0.306)	(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.084)	(0.133)	(0.057)	(0.138)	(0.092)
Loss margin × Female			0.332	0.424**	−0.660***	−0.500***	0.044	0.125
			(0.202)	(0.179)	(0.165)	(0.168)	(0.290)	(0.243)
Lost × Female			−0.044***	−0.039***	0.019	0.014	0.042***	0.028**
			(0.011)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.014)	(0.013)
Loss margin × Lost × Female			0.126	0.033	0.959***	0.802***	0.245	0.156
			(0.283)	(0.247)	(0.201)	(0.212)	(0.322)	(0.286)
Canton+year fixed effects?	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Bandwidth (Wasserman's)	0.1	0.094	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096
Observations	40,828	155,665	196,493	196,493	196,493	196,493	113,133	113,133
R^2	0.092	0.096	0.104	0.124	0.072	0.128	0.088	0.133

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Standard errors clustered by canton and uniform kernel used for local linear estimation in all models. Bandwidths are taken from Wasserman. Running variable equals votemargin normalized by eligibles.

Table A.16: (Fixed Effects) OLS with Wasserman-bandwidths; raw votemargin

	Dependent variable:							
	Run again anytime							Run again in next election
	Women Only	Men Only	All candidates					First-time candidates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Loss margin	0.00003***	0.00001**	0.00001**	0.00001	−0.00003***	−0.00002***	−0.00001	−0.00001
	(0.00001)	(0.00000)	(0.00000)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
Lost	−0.365***	−0.311***	−0.311***	−0.337***	−0.290***	−0.291***	−0.416***	−0.417***
	(0.014)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.017)	(0.012)	(0.019)	(0.012)
Female			−0.040***	−0.037***	−0.119***	−0.053***	−0.140***	−0.080***
			(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.007)	(0.016)	(0.011)
Loss margin × lost	−0.00001	0.00000	0.00000	0.00001	0.00004***	0.00003***	0.00002*	0.00002
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
Loss margin × Female			0.00002***	0.00001**	−0.00000	−0.00001***	−0.00000	−0.00001
			(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00000)	(0.00000)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
Lost × Female			−0.055***	−0.052***	0.044***	0.029**	0.065***	0.045***
			(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.013)	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.014)
Loss margin × Lost × Female			−0.00002**	−0.00001**	0.00000	0.00001***	−0.00000	0.00000
			(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00000)	(0.00001)	(0.00001)
Canton+year fixed effects?	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Bandwidth (Wasserman's)	0.1	0.094	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096	0.096
Observations	47,308	166,907	214,215	214,215	214,215	214,215	122,676	122,676
R^2	0.090	0.102	0.110	0.138	0.077	0.168	0.095	0.166

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Standard errors clustered by canton and uniform kernel used for local linear estimation in all models. Bandwidths are taken from Wasserman. Running variable equals raw votemargin.

Table A.17: (Fixed Effects) OLS with optimal bandwidths; raw votemargin

	Dependent variable:							
	Run again anytime							Run again in next election
	Women Only	Men Only	All candidates					First-time candidates
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Loss margin	0.0003***	0.0003**	0.0003***	0.0002***	−0.0002***	−0.0002***	0.00000	−0.00001
	(0.00005)	(0.00003)	(0.00004)	(0.00004)	(0.00003)	(0.00003)	(0.00005)	(0.0001)
Lost	−0.206***	−0.159***	−0.158***	−0.156***	−0.247***	−0.262***	−0.308***	−0.319***
	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.022)	(0.015)	(0.022)	(0.019)
Female			−0.094***	−0.103***	−0.126***	−0.058***	−0.151***	−0.100***
			(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.012)	(0.021)	(0.018)
Loss margin × lost	−0.00001	0.0001	0.0002	0.001***	0.0004***	0.0004***	0.0003***	0.0004***
	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.00003)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Loss margin × Female			0.0003***	0.0004***	0.00002	0.00001	0.0001	0.0001
			(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.00005)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Lost × Female			0.009	0.002	0.036	0.041**	0.059**	0.061**
			(0.020)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.019)	(0.027)	(0.025)
Loss margin × Lost × Female			−0.0002	−0.0005**	−0.00004	−0.00001	−0.0002	−0.0001
			(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Canton+year fixed effects?	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Bandwidth (MSE-Optimal)	412.306	251.246	231.983	231.983	524.952	524.952	454.045	454.045
Observations	13,212	49,203	52,959	52,959	101,061	101,061	49,879	49,879
R^2	0.094	0.082	0.086	0.136	0.074	0.168	0.105	0.187

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Standard errors clustered by canton and uniform kernel used for local linear estimation in all models. Bandwidths are taken from rdrobust-estimations. Running variable equals raw votemargin.