

The political participation in Italy from a gender perspective

Sara Demofonti - Linda Laura Sabbadini
Italian National Institute of Statistics

6th Global Forum on Gender Statistics

Helsinki 24-26 October 2016



Framework

✓ Two dimension of the participation:

- political participation elections (administrative sources)
 visible (indicators from surveys)
 invisible (indicators from surveys)
- institutional participation representation in decision-making bodies
 (administrative sources)

Both necessary to better investigate the phenomenon

Political participation



elections



administrative sources



indicators from surveys

Institutional participation

representation



administrative sources



Framework

- ✓ Indicators to measure visible and invisible political participation in the larger context of the social participation
- ✓ Visible participation:
 - being enrolled in a political party
 - participating to a demonstration
 - attending to a political meeting
- ✓ Invisible participation:
 - listening to a political debate
 - talking about politics at least once a week
 - getting informed about politics at least once a week
- ✓ Long time series 1993 2015: comparison over time
- ✓ Relation between data and national political elections and EU elections

Long time
series
1993-2015

Visible participation

Political parties
Demonstrations
Political meeting

Invisible participation

Getting informed
Speaking
Listening

National political
elections and EU
elections

Data source

- ✓ Survey: Multipurpose Survey on Living Conditions and Quality of Life
- ✓ Sample: 24.000 households
- ✓ Technique: face to face interview and self-compiled questionnaire
- ✓ The most important source to understand political participation, involvement in the political life of the country and disaffection with politics
- ✓ Data useful to analyse political participation within the quality of life

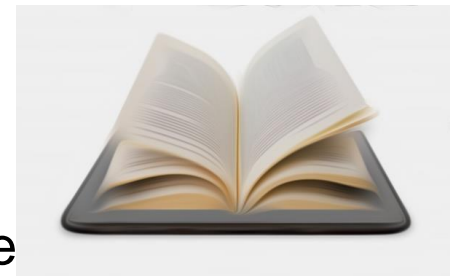
Multipurpose Survey on Living Conditions and Quality of Life



24.000 households

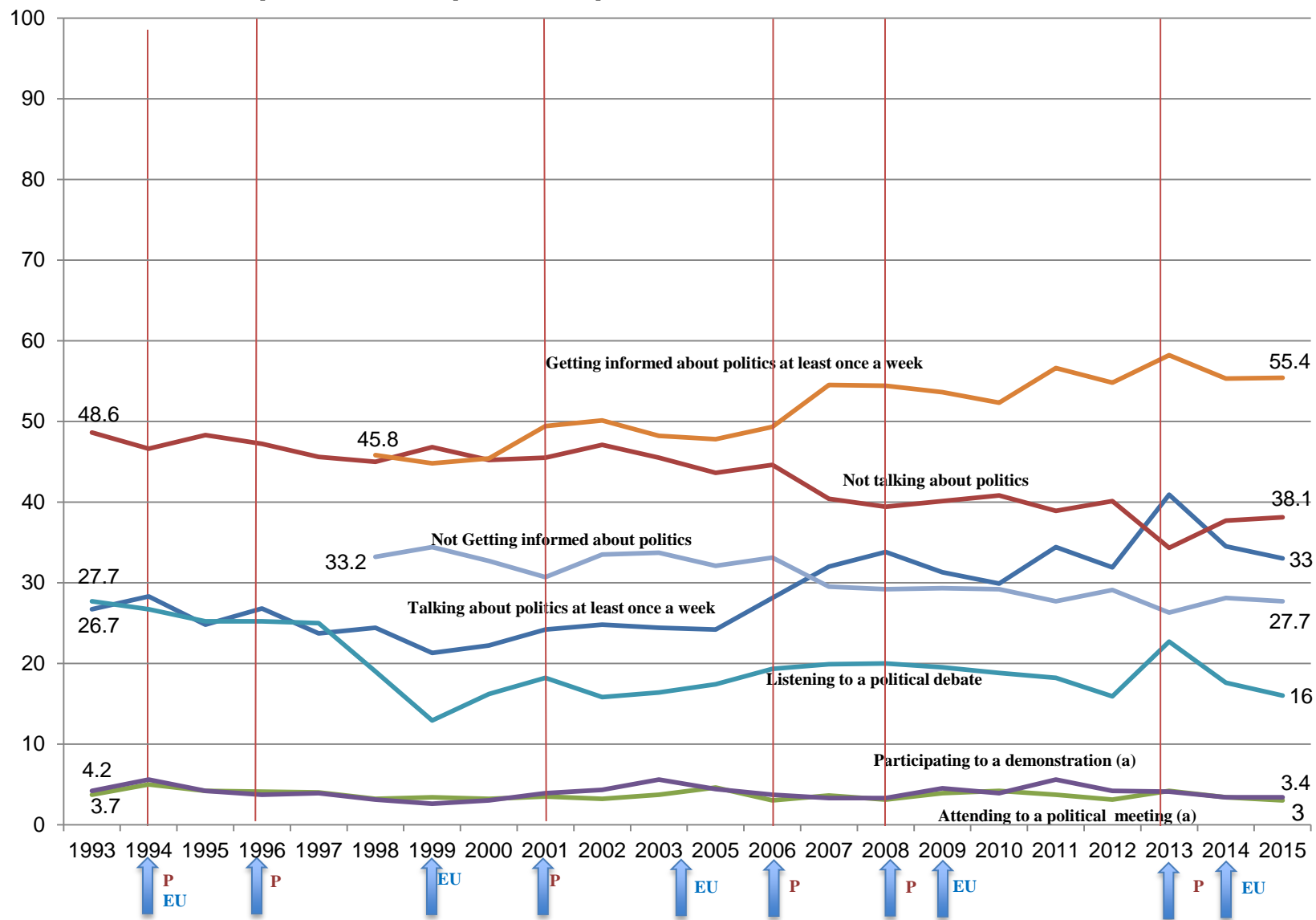


face to face interview
and self-completed questionnaire

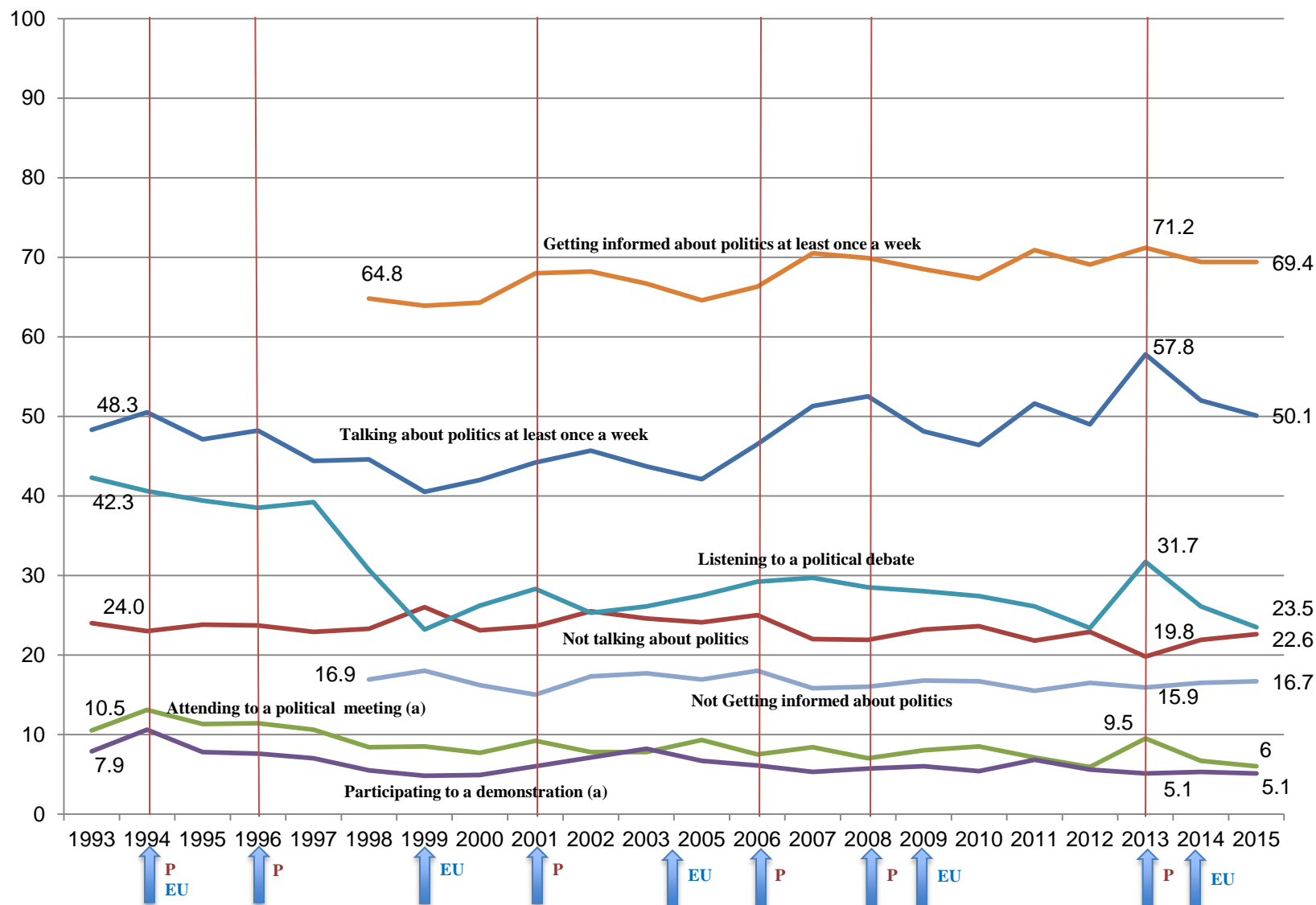


political participation,
involvement in the political
life of the country and
disaffection with politics

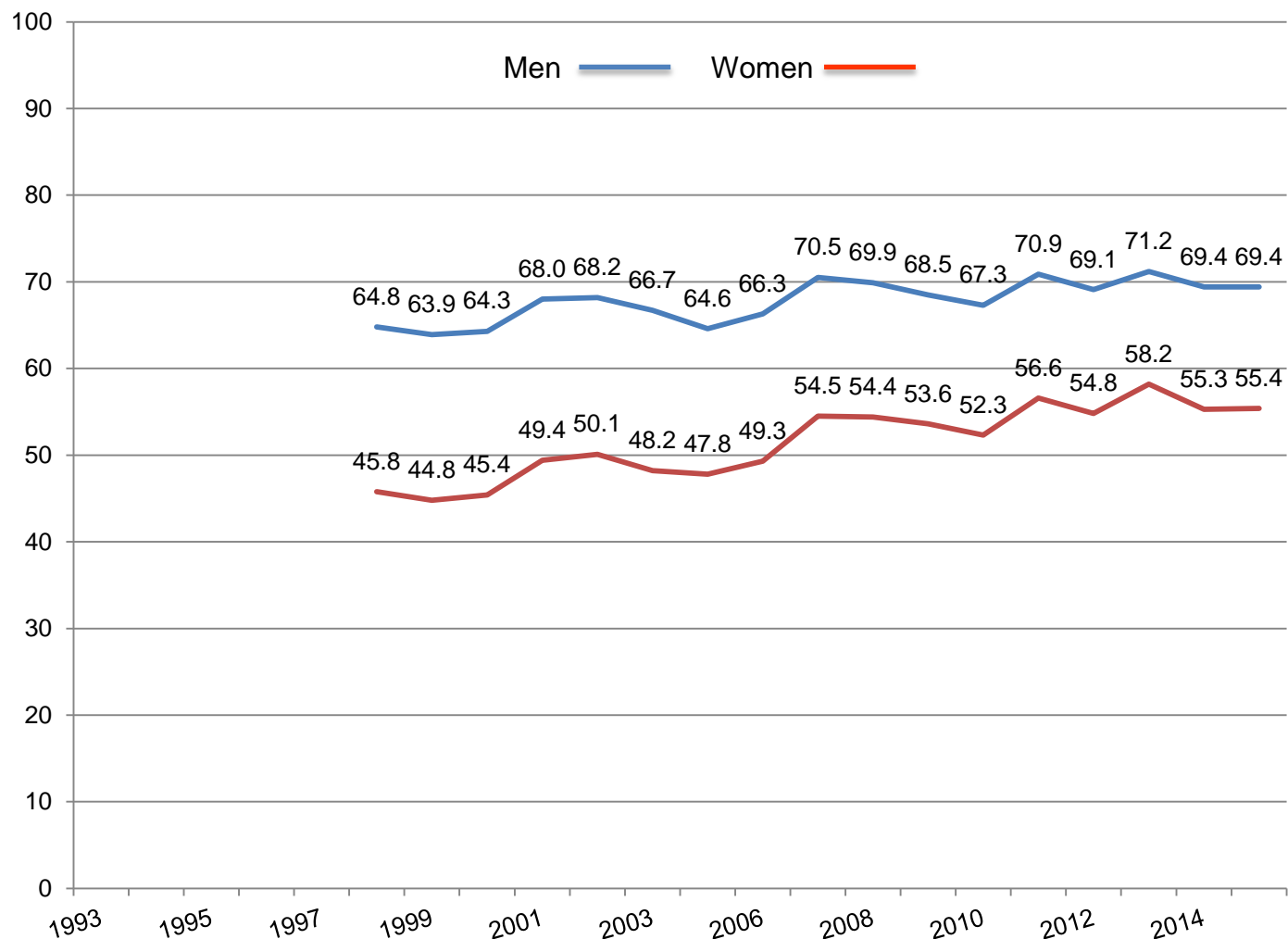
Women's political participation



Men's political participation



The invisible participation: getting informed about politics at least once a week



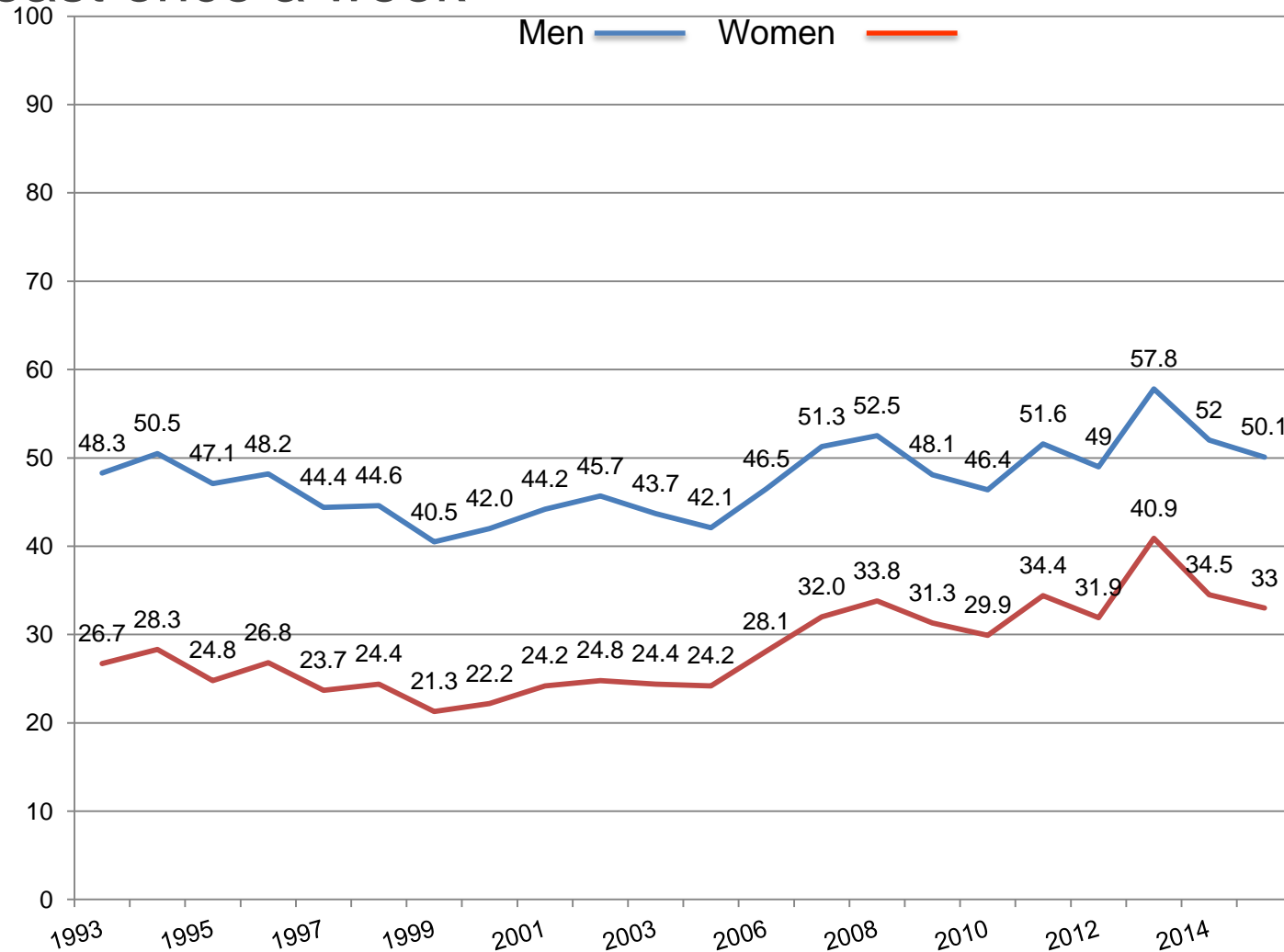
The invisible participation: getting informed about politics at least once a week

- ✓ The most common modality of political participation
- ✓ The gender difference in this modality exists, but has a decreasing trend over time thanks to the growth of the values of women
- ✓ Trends are very similar for women and men. The increasing for women is a little bit higher

The invisible participation: getting informed about politics at least once a week

- ✓ The differences are very low in the youth age and increase with age with a quite similar situation (from 11 to 12 percentage points) between men and women aged 25-59 and gradually increasing for the last three age classes
- ✓ The most relevant contribution to the reduction of the gender gap has been given by the increasing of the participation of women aged 45-59 and also by the women 60 and more
- ✓ The youngest women are more variable in their behaviours with increasing and decreasing and with the same values at the beginning and at the end of the period considered
- ✓ The gender differences among people aged 14-17 have been always very low, the trends is very similar for women and men

The invisible participation: talking about politics at least once a week

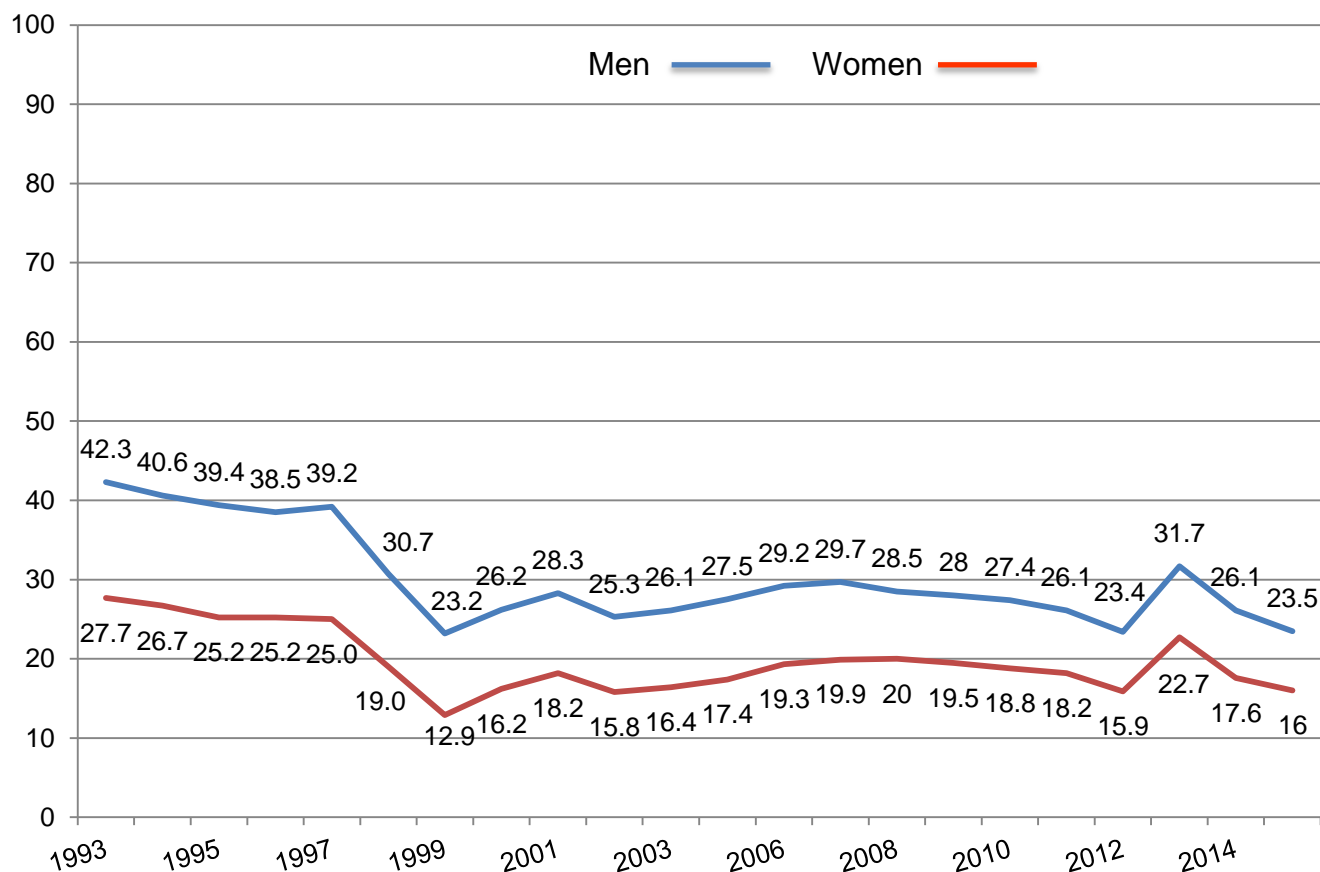


The invisible participation: talking about politics at least once a week

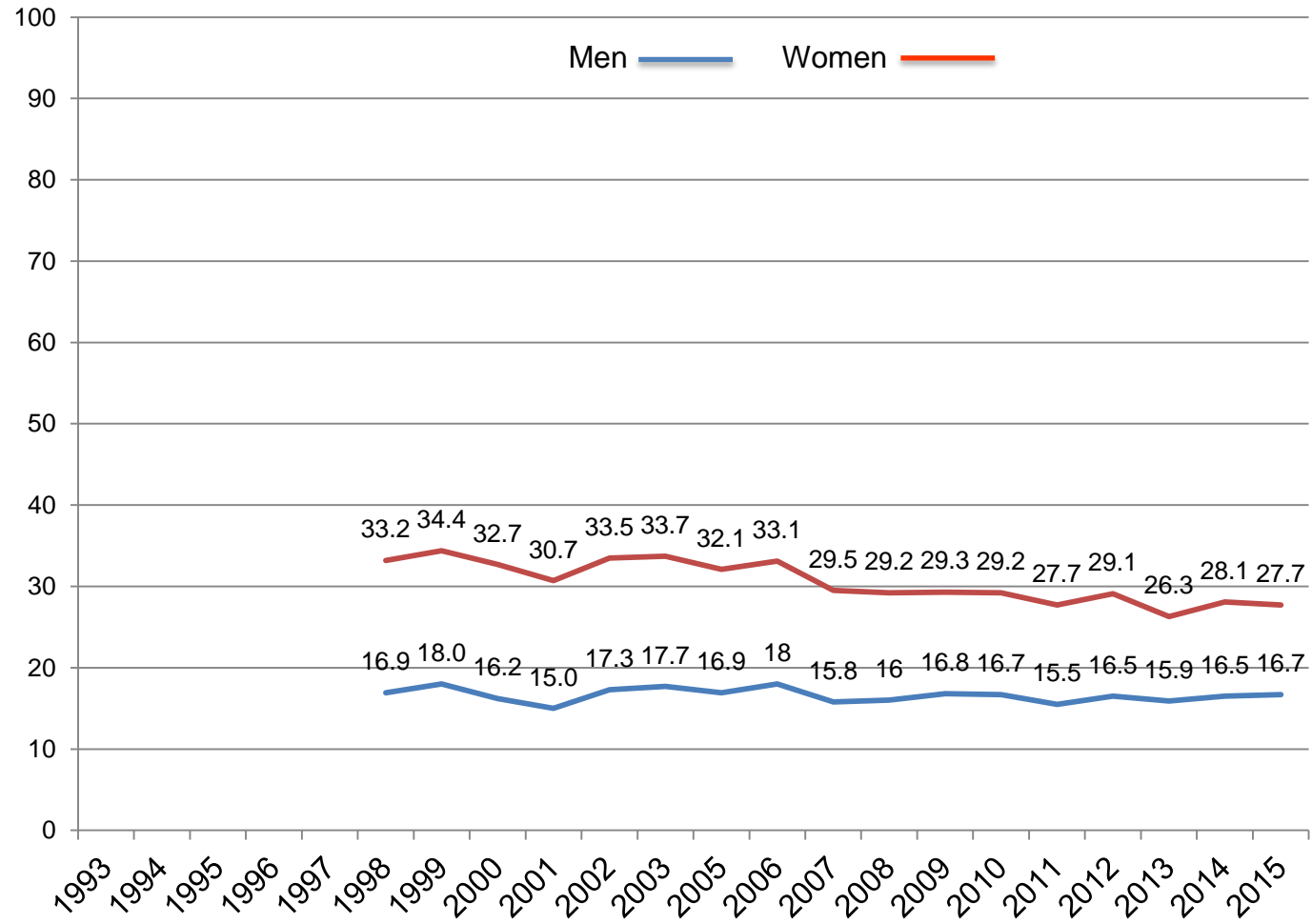
- ✓ Less used than “getting informed”
- ✓ The activity of talking about politics is influenced by the election time
- ✓ Trends are very similar for men and women
- ✓ The gender difference, such as the previous modality exists, but has a decreasing trend over time thanks to the growth of the values of women

The invisible participation: listening to a political debate

The gender gap decreased and the reduction is due to the reduction of values for men



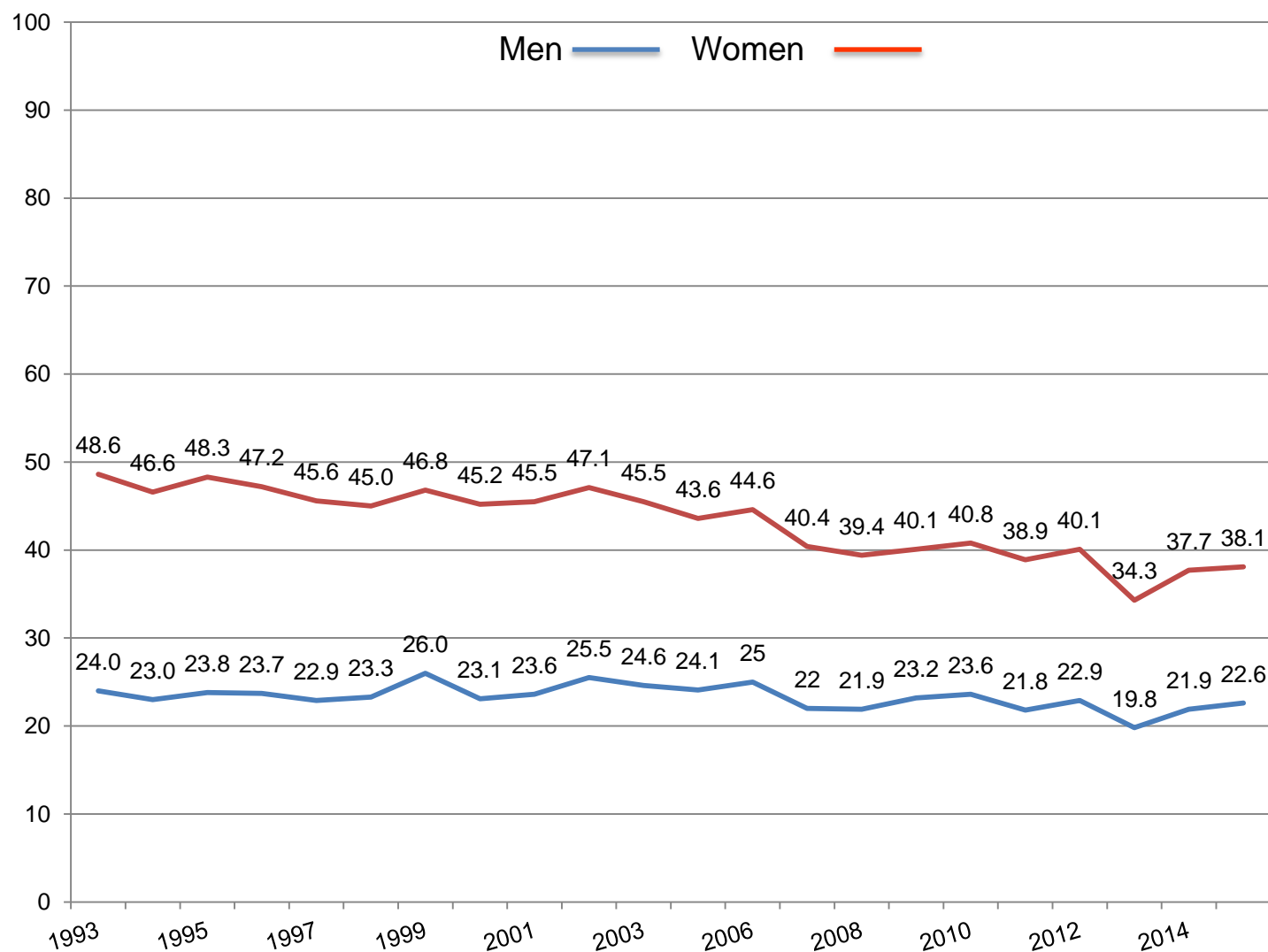
The left out: not getting informed about politics



The left out: not getting informed about politics

- ✓ The percentages referred to men do not change over time
- ✓ The trend for women is more changeable. From 33% to 28%
- ✓ Among men, young and 75 years old and more show the greatest disinterest
- ✓ Gender differences are more evident for people aged 65 and more, but in the last age groups the gap between women and men is decreasing
- ✓ Among young there aren't notable gender differences
- ✓ Women and men show different intensity (once a week or less frequently) in “getting informed” rather than in “not getting informed”

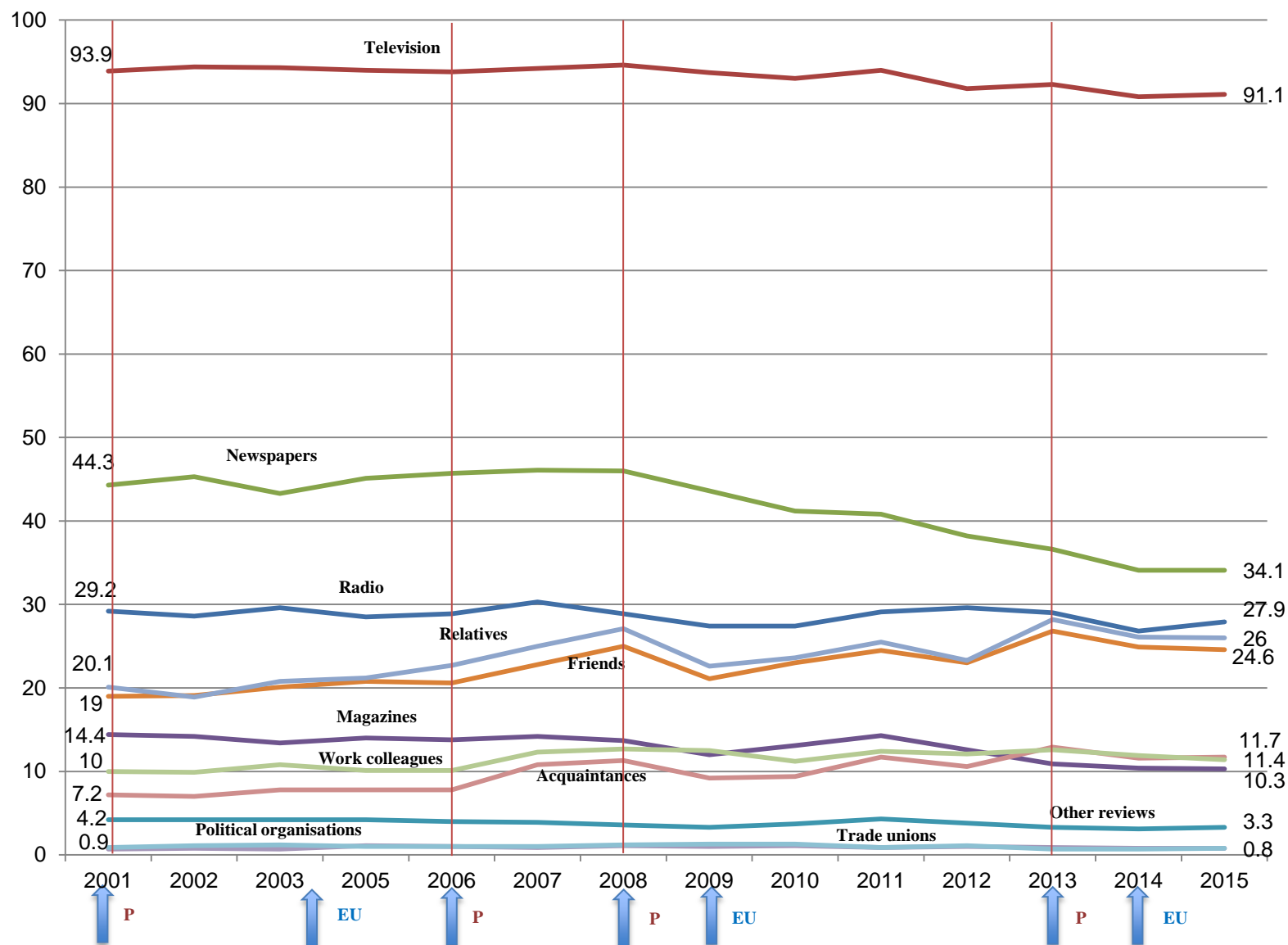
The left out: not talking about politics



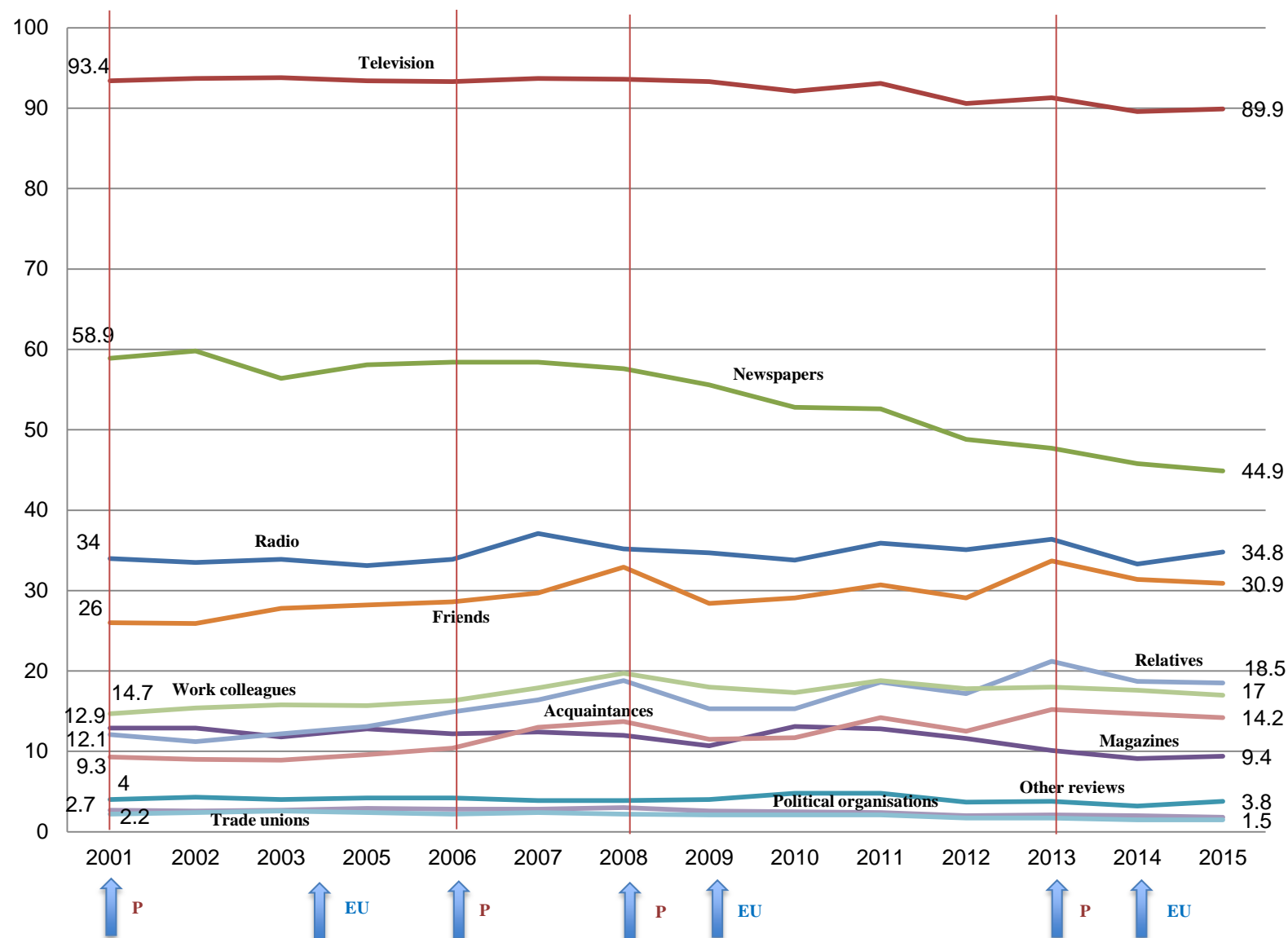
The left out: not talking about politics

- ✓ Small changes for men over time
- ✓ Significant reduction for women from 48,6% to 38,1%
- ✓ The gender gap decreased thanks to the reduction of values for women

Modalities of political information - Women



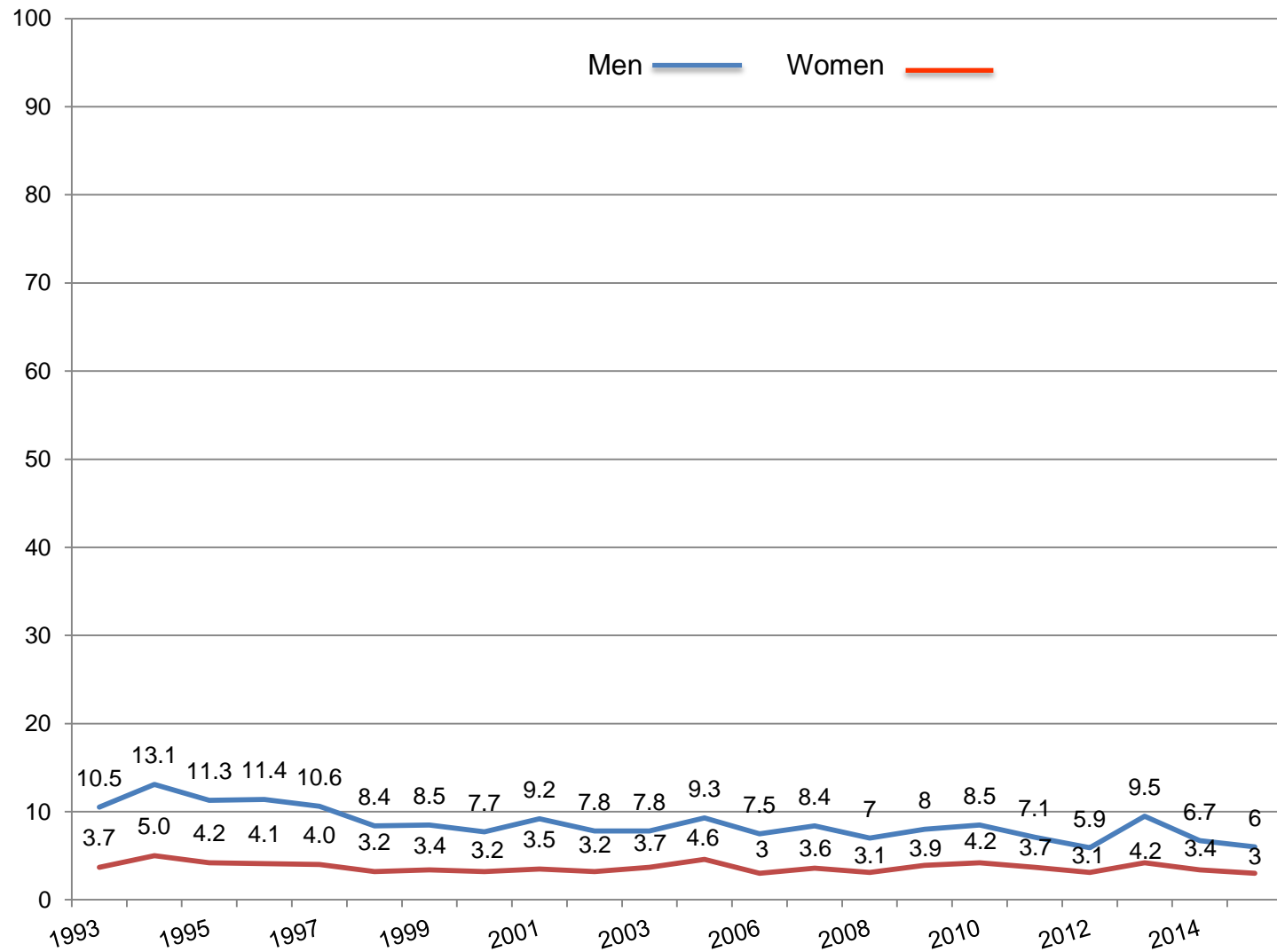
Modalities of political information - Men



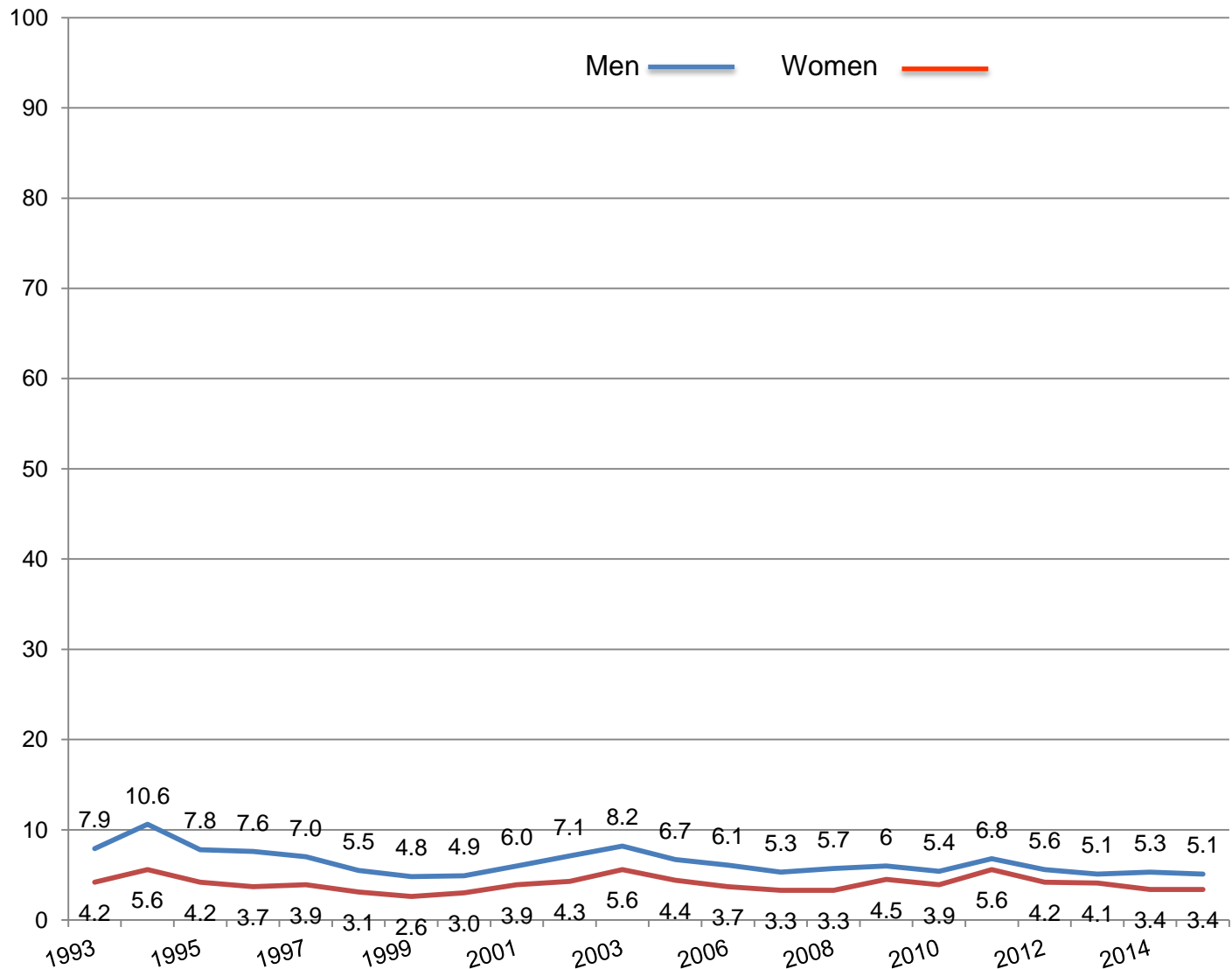
Modalities of political information

- ✓ The television is the most used instrument to be informed about politics
- ✓ The web is not, as belief, the most preferred modality: chosen only the 25% of those informed
- ✓ Traditional mass media are prevalent
- ✓ Decreasing trend for newspaper
- ✓ Women are mostly informed by relatives, men by friends, work colleagues, acquaintances

The visible participation: political meetings



The visible participation: demonstrations



The visible participation: political meetings and demonstrations

- ✓ The trend for men is flat
- ✓ Less chosen modalities
- ✓ No relevant gender differences

Worst performers

- ✓ women
- ✓ 65 years old and more
- ✓ low social status
- ✓ low education level
- ✓ living in the South of the country
- ✓ Referred to getting informed and talking about politics modalities

Best performers

- ✓ men
- ✓ 35-64 years old
- ✓ high social status
- ✓ high education level
- ✓ living in the North-Central area of the country
- ✓ Referred to all modalities of invisible participation

Thank you!