The Return of the King:  
Political conflict and female labor force participation

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Introduction

- What are the effects of a political conflict (violent ideological war) on women’s employment?
- The political conflict: The Greek Civil War of 1946-49 between conservative supporters of the monarchy and left-wing supporters of the communists.
- The measure of political conflict: The share of votes in a referendum about the Return of the King right before the conflict (shown in the map) to show the level of political opposition to the conservative regime.

Why female labor force participation (FLFP)?

- My hypothesis is that opposition to the conservative regime, namely monarchy, challenges gender norms laying the basis for social change regarding women’s roles in society.
- I show that women in areas exposed to left-wing ideologies participate in the labor markets in higher numbers.
- As a falsification test, I find no evidence that this political conflict affects male labor force participation.

Method

- Difference-in-differences model: 
  \[ FLFP_{pt} = \beta \text{PoliticalOpposition}_{p} \times \text{post1949}_t + \gamma_p + \delta_t + \epsilon_{pt} \]
  \( \beta \): the change in percentage points of the female labor force participation as the level of political opposition increases

  - Figure on the left: Each line corresponds to a group of areas with a defined level of political opposition (low, medium, or high). FLFP is normalized to 100 in 1951. The vertical red lines indicate the years of the civil war (1946-1949).
    A. Before political conflict: FLFP similar in all areas
    B. After political conflict: FLFP higher in areas with more opponents to monarchy

Results

- Figure on the right: The coefficients on pre-war years are close to zero and not statistically significant, suggesting that there are no pre-war trends in FLFP. The effects in the years following the war are positive and significant. In provinces that experienced a 10% increase in political opposition, the increase of the FLFP rate ranges from 1.9 pp in 1961 to 1.8 in 1971 to approximately 1.5 in 1981.
  - Main finding: areas with more left-wing opponents to the conservative regime, experienced an increase in female labor force participation after the civil war was over and this increase persists over time.
  - Mechanism: I find that areas opposed to the conservative regime have a lower demand for church attendance, and this could indicate they are less conservative.