Record Nr.	UNINA9910825852903321
Titolo	Women and citizenship in Britain and Ireland in the twentieth century : what difference did the vote make? / / edited by Esther Breitenbach and Pat Thane
Pubbl/distr/stampa	London ; ; New York, : Continuum, c2010
ISBN	1-283-20612-9 9786613206121 1-4411-4900-7
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (257 p.)
Altri autori (Persone)	ThanePat BreitenbachEsther
Disciplina	323.340941
Soggetti	Citizenship - Great Britain - History - 20th century Citizenship - Ireland - History - 20th century Women's rights - Great Britain - History - 20th century Women's rights - Ireland - History - 20th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. [227]-234) and index.
Nota di contenuto	Contents; List of tables and figures; Acknowledgements; Contributors; 1 Introduction; 2 Women and political participation in England, 1918- 1970; 3 'Providing an opportunity to exercise their energies': the role of the Labour Women's Sections in shaping political identities, South Wales, 1918-1939; 4 Count up to twenty-one: Scottish women in formal politics, 1918-1990; 5 Scottish women's organizations and the exercise of citizenship c. 1900-c. 1970; 6 The 'women element in politics': Irish women and the vote, 1918-2008 7 'Aphrodite rising from the Waves'? Women's voluntary activism and the women's movement in twentieth-century Ireland8 Conflicting rights: the struggle for female citizenship in Northern Ireland; 9 'Apathetic, parochial, conservative'? Women, elite and mass politics from 1979 to 2009; 10 Feminist politics in Scotland from the 1970's to 2000's: engaging with the changing state; 11 Women and political representation in post-devolution Scotland: high time or high tide?; 12 Devolution, citizenship and women's political representation in Wales

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	13 The refuge movement and domestic violence policies in Wales Selected bibliography; Index
Sommario/riassunto	The continuing under-representation of women in political and public life remains a matter of concern across a wide range of countries, including the UK and Ireland. Within the UK it is a topical issue as political parties currently debate strategies, often controversial, which will increase women's representation. At the same time, devolution has ushered in significant change in the level of women's representation in Scotland and Wales and improved representation for women in Northern Ireland. That such increases in women's representation in political institutions have been slow in coming is