



Conference Report
Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung EU Office
Brussels, November 2014

Petra Ahrens
Serena D'Agostino
Alison Woodward

Building a gender just society

A common European agenda
for gender equality

Table of contents

Preface	3
I. Introduction: What should a common gender justice agenda look like in the current policy context? ...	5
Building a gender just society – the European agenda in a complicated globe	5
II. Economics of tomorrow: achieving more equal, inclusive and sustainable growth:	
feminist and progressive macro-economic frameworks	5
Care and growth	5
New opportunities and policy options.....	6
III. European Elections 2014 – Then what? Setting political agendas and priorities for	
gender equality after 2015	6
Political continuation, disjunctures and policy context.....	6
New/old issues on the agenda	6
IV. Progressive family policies, migration and mobility and the information society and their	
implications for gender justice and sustainable growth in Europe	7
Care economies and (new) families.....	7
The gendered face of migration.....	7
New technologies and digitalization	8
V. The Way Forward?	8
Annex.....	10
Workshop summaries	10
Abstracts of presentations and speeches.....	13
Reading suggestions.....	23
The Authors.....	24

Impressum:

© Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung | EU Office Brussels | Rue du Taciturne 38 | 1000 Brussels | Tel : +32(0)2 234 6290 |
 Fax : +32(0)2 234 6281 | fes@fes-europe.eu | www.fes-europe.eu | Responsible: Friederike Kamm |
 Editors Petra Ahrens, Serena D'Agostino, Alison Woodward | Layout: Pellens Kommunikationsdesign GmbH |

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.

Commercial use of all media published by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is not permitted without the written consent of the FES.

Preface

Inequality is a reality in Europe and even rising, especially for women. This is a structural trend driven, among other factors, by our economic system. As the index of the European Institute for Gender Equality shows, we are only halfway to achieving gender equality in Europe. Gender gaps still persist.

Gender equality policies in the European Union face multiple challenges. The economic and financial crisis and ongoing austerity measures are widely used as an excuse for cuts in public spending. They tend to slow down or even put on hold national and European gender equality legislation. Moreover recovery and investment programmes are predominantly gender blind. As a consequence the economic situation for women and men has deteriorated since 2009. Further the rise of far right parties has given ground for anti-feminist movements and a discourse on “Gender Ideology” in Europe.

To foster a debate on these issues, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) EU Office organized an international conference in Brussels entitled “Building a gender just society – A common European agenda for gender equality” in November 2014. The conference continued a dialogue on feminist economics between academics, civil society and politicians, established at a previous FES conference in Athens in 2013. With these annual experts meetings the FES wants to contribute to a continuous exchange on how to achieve more equitable, inclusive and sustainable societies.

Experts from Europe and the US developed visions and recommendations to make our societies more gender just. Core questions were: How will alternative macro-economic policies and models for sustainable and fair growth look? How are national and European (gender) policies contributing to more gender just societies, and which priorities are core for a new EU gender equality strategy after 2015?

In parallel workshops gender-specific challenges in areas such as care economy, digital economy and

society, migration as well as the criteria of EU funding instruments were examined in depth. Further interventions focused on modern family policy models oriented at current needs of parents as well as new concepts for family working time schemes.

The promotion of gender equality should not be seen as a cost but as an important investment in our future and the economic prosperity of our societies. The importance of cultural and social reproduction for our societies and economies are not sufficiently taken into consideration by conventional indicators for growth. We need new indicators to measure gender equality and well being in our societies. As Associate Professor for International Macroeconomics, Gender and Development at Colorado State University Elissa Braunstein, underlined in her intervention, we have to identify sustainable growth paths that promote gender equality and support social reproduction.

The basic principle of gender equality is a fundamental right and not just a “luxury” in good times. Gender equality is a question of justice and not of growth. Therefore politics are crucial and an important actor for change. Senior economist Helene Periver pointed out in her speech that Europe has a central role to play in a new articulation between market, welfare state and the family. “Public Policies and regulation of the labour market are the necessary condition to make the market a tool for empowering women”. Europe has the choice between “black austerity and a pink new deal”!

Concrete recommendations to this end were formulated during the workshops. State-driven investment in professional childcare facilities has to increase considerably, in order to provide better conditions for reconciling work and family life and to improve early childhood education. Moreover the need of a better protection of the rights of domestic workers was underlined. The experts asked for ratification and implementation of the ILO convention 189 on domestic work in due time.

With this conference documentation the FES presents the main outcomes and recommendations discussed during the meeting. We would like to thank the authors Professor Alison Woodward (Institute for European Studies, Vrije Universiteit Brussel), Petra Ahrens (Researcher, Humboldt University Berlin) and Serena D'Agostino (Researcher, Institute for European

Studies, Vrije Universiteit Brussel) as well as the speakers and participants of the conference "Building a gender just society – A common European agenda for gender equality" for their contributions and support.

Friederike Kamm

Policy Officer, EU-Office Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung

Building a gender just society

I. Introduction: What should a common gender justice agenda look like in the current policy context?

Building a gender just society – the European agenda in a complicated globe

The term ‘gender justice’ underlines the continuing aspirations for and coupling of the idea of gender equality as a fundamental pillar for a fair society that is based on human rights and the elimination of inequality. With the current European policy focus on economic recovery and growth, the most compelling reason for pursuing gender equality is sometimes lost. The United Nations itself argues that gender justice is essential to achieving millennium development goals, yet in its definition of gender justice, it is also clearly making a normative plea that gender injustice hurts both men and women. For the UN, gender justice ‘entails ending the inequalities between women and men that are produced and reproduced in the family, the community, the market and the state. It also requires that mainstream institutions – from justice to economic policy making – are accountable for tackling the injustice and discrimination that keep too many women poor and excluded.’ (See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2010/11/gender-justice-key-to-achieving-the-millennium-development-goals#sthash.sPeStxgi.dpuf>). This policy conference explored some of the implications of working for gender justice in a Europe that is currently drafting a new Strategy for gender equality to begin in 2015, and also implicated in developing pathways to continue to realize the goals of the 1995 UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2015.

The European Union, with its treaty obligation to proactively promote equality between women and men, is a uniquely placed actor to move the global agenda forward, while linking it to aims for sustainable development. Many member states of the European Union have promoted policies that have significantly

improved gender relations. However, the European Institute for Gender Equality Index shows that even in Europe there is a long way to go to gender equality, let stand ‘gender justice’ which would change the situation for all. Recent developments in both economics and politics pose threats to progress and progressive vision. The conference analyzed new ways of framing the issues and new opportunities. In defining a common agenda, the group began with feminist insights into economics, before turning to changes in the European political context, the potential for care and family policy, the role of migration and opportunities and threats in the information society. In what ways do previous policy experiences inform new EU visions for growth and social progress? These discussions, between academics, civil society actors and political leaders summarized below can lead to a new way forward in shaping European agenda for gender justice and growth.

II. Economics of tomorrow: achieving more equal, inclusive and sustainable growth: feminist and progressive macro-economic frameworks

Care and growth

Even while criticizing the one-eyed focus on economic growth and the use of economic arguments as a reason to promote gender equality, the conference needed to examine ways in which current economic thought should be critiqued for its narrow vision. Standard approaches to economics and growth that structure most European policy discourse continue to ignore the role of care work in social reproduction, and the ways that unequal gender relations locally and globally form the preconditions for growth and its consequences. A strong argument can be made for developing different views on growth that include indicators of gender inequality and of true investments of time and money in the social reproduction of the labour force. Feminist and progressive economics

can thereby help to find economically sustainable growth paths that promote rather than hinder gender equality. However, in the meantime we need to keep a watchful eye on indicators being used in economic discussions, noting for example that while it might seem that the gender gap in employment has been closing, in fact, it is the impact of the increasingly worsening situation of men that explains change. There is reason to criticize both the construction of indicators and the continuing misuse of indicators to falsely indicate progress. The situation is not so rosy if it means that everyone falls to the bottom.

New opportunities and policy options

Using gendered economic analysis to further unpick the persisting differences between European women in employment, participation in top functions, pay, and pensions that are in part due to segregation and difficulties in the predominant ‘full-time- male’ career, can also help open opportunities for revitalizing labour markets. The extent to which gender inequalities undermine economies has been inadequately addressed, but it can be argued that introducing gender economics insights in policy directed at recovery could both revitalize the European economy and make it more sustainable across the life courses of European men and women. Professor Corsi argues for a Pink New Deal which builds on a gendered investment plan (HANSEN, S. & ANDERSEN, L. (2014)), and a broader set of actors mobilized to develop indicators. Recent work in preparing the Beijing +20, and in the mid-review by the European Commission of the 2020 strategy provides tools for a feminist model of sustainable economics.

III. European Elections 2014 – Then what? Setting political agendas and priorities for gender equality after 2015

Political continuation, disjunctures and policy context

Not only the economic but also the political context shapes the possibilities for a gender just agenda. By the fall of 2014 the European Union had a new Euro-

pean Commission under Christian Democratic leadership and of primarily centre-right persuasion. It includes proportionately as many women as in the past, and for the first time, Gender equality is in the title of a DG with the new Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality. The new European Parliament also has a centre majority with a substantial number of representatives coming from far right and nationalist parties. The FEMM Committee of the European Parliament is presently preparing the ‘EU strategy for equality between women and men post 2015’ and attempting to continue its critical and constructive course, although progressives worry that the Strategy is very short, and that it is not treated seriously at the level of the EP. The present proposals are narrow, and unfocused. There needs to be more emphasis on living free from violence, time in work/life balance for both sexes, and gender balance in decision-making. Further continuing demands are how to address economic gaps, research, reproductive rights, the need to include gender in foreign policy concerns and relations with civil society.

New/old issues on the agenda

The issues that are still on the agenda are issues that are also promoted by policy makers in the European Commission and civil society. The Commission needs to have strong partnerships with civil society for any viable common agenda, while civil society also desires better social dialogue going beyond the economic discourse. Unfortunately there is a perception that while actors in the European Parliament and Commission and civil society may share similar opinions on common agenda points such as the gendered economic gap, violence against women, reproductive rights and care, and decision-making, these common agenda points face difficulties with the present composition of the Council and the Parliament. Civil society actors warn against the erosion of women’s rights at the level of the member states in the wake of austerity measures. Further they call for clear strategic and real commitment to international agreements such as the Istanbul Convention against gender based violence.

IV. Progressive family policies, migration and mobility and the information society and their implications for gender justice and sustainable growth in Europe

Care economies and (new) families

Any common European agenda needs to adapt to new developments in family forms, as there has been major transformation in Europe. Reality goes beyond the traditional family models supported by older family policy based on stereotypical roles. The future agenda needs to develop comprehensive family policies based on new evidence that demonstrates that the policies should address not only mothers but also fathers, and care-takers of all generations. Further there needs to be room for the intersectional identities of families in a mobile Europe thanks to migration, divorce, the new openness to same sex families and other factors. The picture is complex. Economically better-off male and female parents in many parts of Europe want increasingly to participate equally in both work and care. New forms of parenthood (single, same sex, and step family) challenge any common agenda, especially when criss-crossed with poverty. Family policies can only be successful in a sustainable framework if they also embrace gender equality principles, and vice versa. The role of fathers is an increasingly important element. Comparative work indicates men can be engaged in childcare on a more equal footing if supported by public and private work place policies. However, this engagement needs to be more than just a few days of leave at childbirth. But it also must be emphasized that concentrating on individualized models may nonetheless come at the cost of women- especially when elder care is brought into play. The future also includes concern for a balanced demography. Evidence points to the increasing rate of women and men foregoing children. Much of Europe needs a combination of professional childcare (which can also create employment) and family work time arrangements where at the critical moments in parents/child lives reduced work levels are possible. Although few European countries have achieved the Barcelona targets, it remains indisputable that early childcare contributes to child development and health which will also improve Europe's economic viability. Thus a common agenda includes increased state investment

in professional childcare, reclaiming flexibility in work life, and measures to equalize care burdens between the sexes across the life course.

The gendered face of migration

Few issues are as relevant for the future of the European Union in the frame of gender justice as the multiple faces of migration both between EU member states, and from third countries near and far. Migratory mobility touches every sector of our gendered lives, ranging from care solutions to opportunities on the labour market. Gender cross cuts migration and gender constructs the kinds of migration seen in Europe. International developments such as the ILO convention 189 on domestic work, help provide new frames for the future, in which paid care acquires a just frame.

EU migration policies are one of the main fields where the so-called "gender-component" appears to be particularly relevant. Although traditional migration theories have commonly looked at migration as a gender-neutral process of movement, a certain "genderization" can be detected at the EU level. Nonetheless, such a phenomenon has not contributed to make migration policies more gender-equal, but rather highlighted the predominant role of migrant men as breadwinner, thus emphasizing gendered assumptions of dependency and traditional concepts of gender roles. How can this be explained? An explanation requires first of all taking into account the economic-based rationale driving EU migration policies. Regular immigration of third-country nationals in the EU Member States has always been functional to the labour market needs and subordinated to the availability of sufficient financial resources to avoid the "newcomers" becoming a burden on the host country. Consequently, migrants willing to work and reside legally in the territory of the Union for a period of longer than three months have basically two possibilities, either possessing an income and meeting all the necessary requirements established by the hosting Member State, or being a family-member economically dependent on the income holder, also known as the "sponsor".

Despite some important changes in trends and a stronger and stronger emphasis on the role of migrant women as workers and salary holders, the male bread-

winner construction still prevails. This is due not only to the social and cultural resistance towards change, but also to actual standardized policies not accurately addressing the specificities of migration. Current policies use the word "migrant" as a one-catch-all-term, which is not always appropriate if we take into account the diversity of migration and its intersectional nature. Considering all the factors, e.g. country of origin, education level, class divisions, age, religion, occurring and interacting within the definition of migration, an intersectional approach to migration policies appears to be necessary. Migrant women and men need to be considered for their specificities, as containers where different categories of social identity converge and interlock. Such an approach would surely facilitate the development of policy tools better tailored to implement gender equality policies and better addressing the real needs of migrants.

Although addressing gender equality in relation to other social categories is slowly gaining ground, "political intersectionality" is still at an embryonic stage in European policy making. Nonetheless, certain optimism needs to be kept: after all, the terms "cross-cutting", "horizontal" and "transversal" so much used in the EU policy language are already intersectional per se – they now need to be put in practice.

New technologies and digitalization

Another issue for the future agenda is the changing nexus of production due to the spread of digital economy which makes possible different configurations across the globe and produces new opportunities and threats that are often not dealt with in a gender/diversity aware situation. Information technologies should have opened potential for reshifting gender balances thanks to the off linking of physical presence to work. Many of the tasks can be carried out anywhere geographically and do not require a 'workplace', making flexibility much more of a reality for workers in these fields. Yet developments show women disproportionately locked out of the more lucrative aspects of the information society (the creative and programming aspects) thanks to negative and gender skewed tech cultures, and the sorts of technologically driven changes in the labour market that affect women. New technologies have led to the displacement of jobs

traditionally held by European women such as work in the consumption, service and distribution sector which is increasingly automatized. A further negative development is the potential of technology to promulgate control and surveillance systems that lead to added stress and pressure as workers are increasingly scrutinized and standardized (leading to a reduction in potential creativity). This is counterbalanced by the potential to mobilize women to acquire enhanced digital education to develop new applications and social innovations. Nonetheless, any agenda for the future needs to take account of the dangers posed by unbridled digital development with no questioning of the existing gender order, as phenomena such as on-line harassment illustrate. New images and media can serve to silence and control gender disorder.

V. The Way Forward?

Any progressive agenda for gender justice in Europe must be able to link to progress on attaining a sustainable globe in terms of climate and energy with human justice and rights. The challenges are multiple. Our understanding of gender must revitalize a concern for gender relationships between all peoples, and particularly address the often forgotten problem of 'masculinities' in attempting to reach a just and sustainable future. Today's world proffers many opportunities for fear. We have fear about climate change, fear about conflicts, war and terrorism, fear about energy use and the dangers of alternatives such as nuclear energy and finally fear about the economic foundations of the developed and developing worlds. All of these fears are cross-hatched with the consequences for women of all origins, orientations and beliefs.

The way forward builds upon acknowledging the strengths that have been built up in the last decades. Europeans have a strong stepping stone of policies that aim to guarantee equal treatment, and pro-active attention to gender equality. Further there are strong networks of progressive women and men in civil society, the academy and political parties that share knowledge and concern about the nexus between gender justice and sustainable growth, as evidenced in this workshop. Finally there is considerable knowledge as to what policies work for gender justice, and

what is needed in the different country settings to achieve a just division between the sexes and across the generations.

A common European agenda for a gender just society in the broader context of global markets and the environment will require the mobilization of more men. For this we need the If- analysis of some of the negative consequences of present forms of masculinities. Such an analysis can also lead to better solutions for care and families with less inequality. A further need for action is taking advantage of the opportunities to

participate on a global scale in forming the new UN Millennium goals for development and the possibilities presented by the new European Parliament and Commission and by the celebration of the UN Beijing Platform +20. Meanwhile, however, continued vigilance is necessary so that the building blocks now in place in the EU are not lost due to currents of fear and false aspirations for austerity. A society that pursues a progressive gender justice agenda will be one that frees up feminine and masculine energies to help us discover ways of living together that will sustain the planet and our future.

Annex

Workshop summaries

The workshop on **“The care economy and progressive family policies – potentials for a sustainable and gender equal society”** focused on providing good childcare services as the precondition for high standards in the care economy and progressive family policies. The participants agreed that childcare can support children’s development, in particular regarding social competencies. In addition, extending professional childcare services means job growth in various respects. Yet the responsibility for organizing and providing good care rests predominantly with the state, because this cannot be handled in the private sphere. Another conclusion of the workshop was that today’s (to-be) parents, the so-called generation internet, are not solely focused on paid work. They want more possibilities to reconcile work, family and private life. This important change in attitudes brings about change in two more aspects. First of all, the role of men, better to say fathers, has to be addressed more concretely. When fathers become more engaged in childcare through parental leave provisions, the chances to also challenge and change the traditional gender-specific division of labour in the household increase. Involving fathers brings about advantages to men and women. Paid and unpaid work may be distributed more equally in the long term benefiting fathers who want to increase their family time and mothers in increasing their working time. Such a dual earner-dual carer model might also increase the desired number of children which – again – influences the possibilities of how to handle future demographic prospective in the member states of the European Union. Nowadays, twenty-five percent of all women aged 25 to 45 years have no children. In order to find a proper reaction to the demographic consequences, providing professional childcare services becomes one crucial precondition to convince women to become mothers. Furthermore, the debate on care needs to be extended and intensified to include the subject of care for the elderly; a subject that is closely interlinked with childcare provisions.

Policy recommendations:

- considerably increase state-driven investment in professional childcare facilities in order to provide better conditions for reconciling work and family life and improve early childhood education
- re-claiming and re-framing “flexicurity” with a strong emphasis enabling and guaranteeing more choices to mothers and fathers
- secure easy and affordable access to professional childcare facilities for all families – introduce publicly financed professional domestic services for families that also improves the conditions for those working in this labour market segment
- develop measures and regulations appropriate to the changing needs across the life course with the aim to avoid negative effects.

The workshop **“Digital economy – Gender equality and the potentials and risks of digitalization and technological change”** illuminated the effects of today’s digitalization from a top-down and a bottom-up perspective or – in the words of one speaker, Vicky Kolovou – looking at the ‘forest’ and the ‘tree’. How digitalization changed labour markets, occupations, jobs and unpaid work was addressed by the first speaker, Ursula Huws, who illustrated the negative effects of digitalization by the means of a schematic overview in the form of a table. The table combines paid and unpaid work as columns with reproductive and directly productive labour resulting in four boxes that allow tracking dynamics and movements from one box to another – horizontally, vertically and diagonally. ICTs play a critical role in shifting labour between categories and most of the dynamics place women at the borders and produce negative effects in their kind of work. This was illustrated by the example of the “Taylorization” of unpaid work in the box combination unpaid work/directly productive labour coined with the term “consumption”. Companies use digitalization to outsource jobs and services to unpaid work predominantly carried out by women. For instance, things like online check-in, buying products on the internet or self-scanning “service” shift the work

to the private unpaid sphere and simultaneously cause job losses in the segments that provided the services beforehand as paid work. The changes to labour relations and unpaid/unpaid work unfold also globally with hyper-surveillance jobs (e.g. micro-task pixel redesign) distributed across time and space that are assigned by demand to workers who are available at that point anywhere. This rather critical standpoint was counterbalanced by the second speaker, Vicky Kolovou, who provided insights into opportunities offered by the digital economy but seldom made use of by (predominantly yet not exclusively) women. While acknowledging the unstoppable digital development, we can also see the conflict with how slow policies and regulations are in catching up with it. Kolovou also encouraged promoting people, particularly women, to start participating in making codes. By reframing learning how to code as learning a new language instead of learning technology, the engagement would become more accessible.

Policy recommendations:

- ensure that digital education is combined with education on gender equality in order to avoid exclusion
- initiate open talks between all partners involved such as policy-makers, the digital community and others
- offer every child choices in their education of how to become digitally educated and secure free access
- protect the weak or vulnerable groups by new legislation in order to combat misogyny and online harassment.

In the workshop **“The gendered face of migration”**, three speakers covered the topic from three different and quite complementary perspectives that allowed understanding the issue within a broad context. The term “migrant” is a catch-all-term that is not appropriate, because migration is so diverse and further includes intersectional aspects such as country of origin, education level, class divisions, and age which all play an important role. As a consequence, an intersectional perspective on migration becomes even more important. Another important agreement was that migration is not a women's issue, yet is a highly gendered issue. Merel Terlien distinguished three groups of female migrants: 1) women coming alone for work (including precarious, domestic, informal living in

workers), 2) women accompanying their spouses, and 3) refugees and asylum seekers. Crosscutting these distinction are further differentiations such as the recently growing intra-EU migration caused by the economic and social crisis as opposed to “external” migrants from outside the EU. Also, migrants differ regarding their qualification, splitting up into highly qualified workers – mainly in the industrial sector and mainly male-dominated – and feminized, lower skilled, but “naturally qualified” domestic work. Kyoko Shinozaki underlined the bias of focusing only on receiving countries. There is a necessity to also look on the effects of migration on the countries of origin. Overall, the economic crisis accelerated domestic and migrant work and the abuse of systems (e.g. au-pair) to the disadvantage of migrants has led to deteriorating working conditions.

Policy recommendations:

- strengthen a rights-based approach in the EU, in particular through pressure to ratify the ILO convention 189 on domestic work and monitor its factual implementation
- introduce an intersectional perspective in any aspect of this policy issue
- develop political strategies that are able to tackle the deteriorating situation and built up a sustainable idea of migration particularly with view to demographic changes in the EU
- foster conversation and interaction between activists, academia and policy-makers in order to built up a strong network that is able to highlight negative effects and to support concrete actions that might improve the situation.

In the workshop **“Gender equality as an engine to modernization: Advancing gender equality in EU policies and funding to stimulate growth and social progress in Europe”**, two speakers, Manuela Geleng and Ann-Charlott Kersting illuminated the current situation at the European level. Both concentrated on the role of the European Structural Funds, in particular the European Social Fund, and their role in promoting gender equality on a transnational level with impact on the national and sometimes even regional level. Manuela Geleng spoke about gender-equality related requirements of the new funding period in the European Social Fund. She emphasized

that many of the current and future employment challenges have gendered roots and implications. In order for the European Social Fund, and the other European Structural and Investment Funds, to be effective, a gender perspective must be taken into account when addressing its key themes and actions. From her perspective, this needs to be tackled in three of the EU 2020 flagship initiatives: the agenda for new skills and jobs, with a target of 75% of 20-64 year olds being employed by 2020; Youth on the move, with targets of reducing school drop-out rates to below 10% and at least 40% of 30-34 year olds completing third-level education; and the European platform against poverty, with a target of at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Manuela Geleng stressed that without gender mainstreaming, the EU 2020 targets will not be achieved and that increasing the understanding of how both economic growth and the current European crisis impacts women and men differently, will strengthen the quality of the implementation of the flagship priorities funded by the ESF. Furthermore, she illustrated that gender inequality still poses a great problem in many EU Member States. The importance of strong gender equality policies as part of growth and employment strategies can be shown in many different areas. Regarding the new "Common Provisions Regulation", broad gender equality implications are not only anchored in the ESF, but all five European Structural and Investment Funds under CPR (with some trillion Euros) comprise provisions to implement the dual gender equality approach of the European Union (e.g. articles 7 CPR and ESF Regulation). The tools for implementing gender equality in the funds are the country specific recommendations and the ex-ante-conditionalities. According to Manuela Geleng, the Council measured operational programmes on

the background of Council recommendations on gender equality. The European Commission will check the operational programmes against the criteria and has already sent programmes back to Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden because they lacked certain provisions. Ann-Charlott illustrated the current situation from the perspective of the 'Community of Practice on Gender Mainstreaming' and reflected upon the implementation of gender mainstreaming implementation in public service administration. According to her, gender mainstreaming in the ESF needs to take into account the fact that different strategies have different conditions for implementation, and analysis is needed prior to making implementation design. Furthermore, bottom-up and top-down factors can vary over time in the implementation process. Therefore, a reflexive approach and monitoring is needed. Different equality strategies lead to different outcomes and are suitable for different purposes, e.g. GM can lead to new discoveries and policy transformation in mainstream policy areas where a gender perspective is currently missing, and specific actions are effective in getting specific results in specific situations.

Policy recommendations:

- Capacity building for actors involved in the integration of gender equality in national and regional policies
- gender equality support structures to guide implementation on all levels – as close as possible to the tasks of the actors
- EU networks of (ESF and other) actors to strengthen capacities and learning from good practice
- implement gender mainstreaming in the ESF according to the "European STANDARD on Gender Mainstreaming in the ESF".

Abstracts of presentations and speeches*

Opening speech: Defining a common European agenda for gender equality

Agnes Hubert

Former advisor responsible for Gender Issues, Fundamental Rights, Employment and Social policies, Internal/External Coherence at Bureau of European Policy Advisers (BEPA) and currently associate researcher at PRESAGE

Inequalities have never been so much in focus: beyond being a result of the economic and financial crisis, they also depend on the long-term trend where capital income increases faster than labour income. The impact on gender equality is straightforward and explains the increasing number of women at risk or in poverty often amongst the “working poor” and their increasing reliance on shrinking welfare systems. Can these dynamics be better understood through the lens of Feminism? For Nancy Fraser, feminist ambivalence between aspirations for participatory democracy and social solidarity and the liberal individualistic scenario on how to get there has led to three dead ends. First, the criticism of the family wage and engagement into the liberal individualized (dual) earners family model translates today into depressed wage levels, decreased job security, declining living standards and a rise in poverty. Second, the concentration on identity politics (gender and other identities) rather than on political economy and the rise of inequalities has diverted attention from devising alternatives for economic

justice. Thirdly, the criticism of welfare paternalism and the “nanny” state has led some to engage into microcredit as a feminist antidote for women’s poverty and subjection, thus legitimating state retrenchment and increasing marketization. While Nancy Fraser refers explicitly to the situation in the US, there are lessons to learn in reviewing the last 20 years in Europe. In Europe as well women have transformed from invisible workers in households to overqualified working poor. The diversity agenda has diluted issues while at the same time the concept of gender is being used to reinstall traditional values and our “social model” is being starved.

The need to address these issues politically as well as the interdependence of our economies leads to the recognition of the European Union as the only arena where a new agenda for gender equality, and for a gender equal Europe, can be developed.

Defining a common European agenda for gender equality is necessary to improve the situation of women in the existing system, introduce new ideas in the political agenda (i.e. social and environmental indicators to mitigate GDP), reshape institutions around trust, responsibility and participation and mobilize interest groups around a gender equality focused agenda for reform.

* The abstracts of the presentations were submitted by the speakers before the conference.

Analysis I: Economics of Tomorrow – what can feminist economics teach us?

“How to achieve more equal, inclusive and sustainable growth? Visions for a new macroeconomic framework for Europe and beyond”

Elissa Braunstein

*Associate Professor for International Macroeconomics,
Gender, Development, Colorado State University*

A feminist framework for understanding macroeconomic growth

Standard macroeconomic models treat growth as primarily the result of capital accumulation and productivity growth. Though most contemporary growth models do incorporate some measure of human as well as physical capital, labour (like land) is not produced but rather spontaneously appears, and human capital is rarely treated as a component of investment. And while modern day growth-oriented policies almost always include calls for skill investment, such calls tend to be limited to increasing formal education. These approaches to macroeconomic management completely ignore the tremendous amount of paid and unpaid care work, much of it done by women, that goes into the production and maintenance of the labour force – the process of social reproduction. They also ignore the role of gender inequality, both within and outside the labour market, in structuring the causes and consequences of growth. This presentation introduces a framework for understanding the macroeconomic connections between growth and social reproduction that takes into account the extent of gender inequality in the labour market and in the distribution of the time and financial costs of social reproduction. My aim will be to contrast a number of different growth paths that illustrate these links, identifying economically sustainable growth paths that promote gender equality and support social reproduction.

Marcella Corsi

*Professor of Economics at the Sapienza University
of Rome*

Reducing gender gaps in the EU: towards a PINK NEW DEAL

In EU countries a sort of marginalisation toward the working woman still reigns, which can be seen in the high concentration of women in low value-added activities and thus low remuneration, and in the major obstacles to achieving top positions within companies, even though the academic performance of women has been, for some years now, better than that of men. The Gender Equality Index (GEI) of the European Institute for Gender Equality shows that the EU is half-way towards gender equality. The range of index scores shows the broad scale of variation throughout the EU in the level of gender equality achieved overall, with much room for improvement in terms of work and economic independence. This analysis looks at the main challenges concerning economic independence and the role of women in the labour market in the EU. In particular, it focuses on the existing gaps between men and women, examining the factors behind them. These include: (I) gender gaps in the labour market (employment, unemployment, working conditions); (II) gender gap in pay; and (III) gender gap in pensions. The analysis takes into account the effects of the crisis and, in drafting policy recommendations, reflects existing good practices. Throughout labour market segregation and women’s broken careers are considered as important factors behind gender gaps.

Looking ahead, the crisis may be a great opportunity for a historical change. The entire economic policy has so far ignored gender inequalities and might tend to ignore them even more now, due to the shortage of resources. By contrast, introducing a gender perspective in the recovery measures would help to get out of the current situation sooner and better.

.....

Hélène Périvier

Economist, Observatoire Français des Conjonctures Economiques, Director of PRESAGE, Sciences Po Paris

How to achieve more equal, inclusive and sustainable growth? Can gender equality in the labour market be accomplished if the existing conditions persist? Are we in midstream or in the wrong stream? These are some of the main questions driving this analysis. It is time for Europe to move towards a new social contract for new macroeconomic policies, by rebuilding a new articulation between the Market, the Welfare State and the Family. Public policies and regulation of

the labour market are the necessary conditions to make the market into a tool for empowering women. Austerity and fiscal consolidation may tend to close this debate which can jeopardize the movement toward gender equality, as we see in France where gender equality is instrumentalized to justify downsizing and cuts in social spending. There is an increasing need for a new compass in Europe to pilot our economic and social organisation toward gender equality. This should be done by choosing an economic growth path that promotes gender equality and not by expecting gender equality to be a stimulus for growth.

.....

Analysis II: The EU after European Elections – setting the agenda and priorities for gender equality after 2015

MEP Maria Noichl

Member of the S&D Group in the European Parliament

The FEMM Committee is currently pushing for the adoption by the Council of two main directives long ago voted by the Parliament: the maternity leave and the promotion of women on boards of directors. At the same time new issues have emerged which will be reflected in the forthcoming report “New Strategy for Gender Equality in the European Union”. Traditional forms of discrimination, like the gender pay gap, will be brought together with newer forms of problems, like the issue of women’s representation in the media. The intersection between different forms and systems of discrimination will also be taken into account. The connections between different forms of discrimination are indeed crucial for the success of the strategy. Furthermore, concrete actions and guidelines should be part of the report, in order to facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the results. For this reason, the report will ask the European Commission to push the Member States and the EU for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention and thereby introduce a coherent framework to combat violence against women. In order to emphasize the fact that gender equality is not only necessary in Europe, but also beyond its borders, the report will also highlight the link with the recommendations of the Beijing Platform, celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2015.

Daniela Bankier

Head of Unit Gender Equality, DG Justice, European Commission

Although some results have been achieved by the current European Commission Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015), the findings of the latest annual report on progress in equality between women and men show that several gender gaps can be still identified, not only in the labour market, where leading positions and higher remuneration are mainly male-oriented, but also in terms of domestic violence and dropout rates. The existing “one-size-fits-all” strategy should definitely move towards a more tailored approach, where to each individual problem corresponds an appropriate related solution.

Furthermore, important results can only be achieved by creating a strong partnership on gender at governance level, i.e. between the EU and its Member States. Such a partnership should involve different national stakeholders, from institutions to civil society. Due to the crucial role played by social partners and civil society in advancing gender equality, the Commission is setting up intense consultations and hearings with these two actors in order to make this process as more participatory as possible.

Claudia Menne

Confederal Secretary, European Trade Union Confederation

The report "Bargaining For Equality: How collective bargaining contributes to eliminating pay discrimination between women and men performing the same job or job of equal value" documents trade union tools and instruments to reduce the gender pay gap, with a specific emphasis on the role of collective agreements to reduce pay inequalities between women and men. Moreover, it shows how trade unions have approached the issue of gender pay inequalities in collective bargaining and gives examples of successful agreements at sectorial and company levels, as well as the challenges faced by trade unions in the context of the increasingly difficult bargaining climate arising from the economic crisis. The Trade Union Movement assessment is dominated by very high unemployment rates in Europe, demonstrating that the crisis is not yet over.

Our main aim is to strengthen a coherent social dialogue at both EU and Member States levels and enhance economic governance. Despite the existence of a "beyond-GDP" discourse in the EU, further efforts are needed and the dialogue on employment and segregation in the labour market has to be additionally emphasized.

Mary Collins

Policy Officer Socio-economic Policies, European Women's Lobby

The EU must keep Beijing alive in its future strategy on equality between women and men

2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, a forward-looking vision for women's rights for the 'new millennia'. 20 years later, how far

have we come? The assessment of the European Women's Lobby (EWL) shows there is still a long way to go. As the international community marks 20 years of the Beijing Platform for Action, a new global framework for development will also be adopted in 2015. Among the 17 proposed Sustainable Development Goals, women's rights are included as a stand-alone goal. Attaining gender equality and empowering women and girls everywhere must also be the mantra of the European Union both internally and in the wider world and be embodied in its renewed Strategy for Gender Equality, to lead the way towards a new world order on gender equality in Europe and worldwide.

The EWL is very pleased to have, for the first time, a Gender Equality Commissioner but also realizes that the political landscape has changed. Power 'hubs' are forming in different places and different spaces where 'real' decisions are made, concentrated in the hands of few. The EWL welcomes the approach of the European Parliament Rapporteur for the future EU Strategy on Gender Equality, Ms Maria Noichl, for her willingness to reach out to a broad spectrum of actors to ensure that the new EU Strategy for Gender Equality will be based on what women want.

For the EWL it is urgent to move from Words to Action, to ensure that the Beijing Platform for Action is kept alive and shapes the future EU Strategy for Gender Equality. The European Women's Lobby is currently focusing on the social and economic impacts of austerity measures on gender and women rights. The key message our organisation intends to spread is that there is an urgent need for consistency in policies: the on-going and visible erosion of women rights at nation level needs to be specifically and consistently addressed. The European Women's Lobby also calls for more civil dialogue through trust and confidence and for the EU to ratify the Istanbul Convention.

Analysis III: Why investing in gender equality pays off – New work time schemes and progressive family policies for sustainable growth in Europe

Zita Gurmai

President of PES Women

Several models of family policies coexist within the European Union, reflecting different approaches and conceptions of the family and various degrees of State/public support or intervention. Because of different social, political, economic and cultural traditions and practices, the situation varies greatly from one Member State to the other. It is extremely reductive to speak about an immovable or frozen in time model of family. Major social progress has been achieved over the past century, especially when it comes to women's empowerment and gender equality, but also more recently in terms of non-discrimination based on sexual orientation. Those positive changes have obviously reshuffled and transformed the traditional model of a patriarchal family that would solely be composed of a woman and a man. The modification on the structure and composition of the labour market, the improvements in the organisation of working time and technological progress have also had a deep impact on families and the conciliation of the work and private spheres. Therefore, it seems essential to take stock of this major shift in the definition and functioning of families and to develop and implement progressive and comprehensive social and family policies that encompass the plurality of choices and situations and offers concrete solutions to address the remaining challenges. Progressive family policies are a major issue not only for women and gender equality but also for the EU as a whole, as they can have deep consequences on the European workforce and labour market. Although the EU has seen some significant improvements in gender equality in the workforce and female employment rates, most of the Member States struggle to reach the 2020 employment rate target of 75% for both women and men. In particular, the female employment rate remains considerably behind the employment rate of men in most of the Member States. Gender imbalances in the EU still remain very high. Europe is facing unprecedented challenges in terms of economic recovery and

long-term demographic changes and imbalances. Improving women's participation to the labour market and their working conditions is paramount to overcome those obstacles.

Petra Mackroth

Head of Unit Family Policies, Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Germany

In order for family policy to be effective, it requires sound knowledge and clear objectives. For example, it needs to be clear about the impact that benefits and services have, and how they relate to one another. At the same time, for policy to be effective, it is important for policy-makers to be aware of the needs and attitudes of the population and of families and to gear the corresponding efforts towards them.

Germany's principal marriage and family-related benefits were examined and evaluated. The evaluation was guided by specified objectives. This approach was chosen because effects and associations can only be identified in relation to concrete objectives. The main finding of the evaluation was that effective reconciliation of family and working life is the driving force behind all other family policy goals. Successful reconciliation requires economic stability for families, the possibility of fulfilling the desire to have children and children's well-being. For the purpose of reconciliation, the most important benefit, according to the evaluation's findings, is state-funded childcare.

In recent years, families' wishes, with respect to the organisation of family and working life have changed, as have the realities of their daily life. Young men and women, and mothers and fathers, wish to have a similar amount of working time and want to share family tasks equally. Thanks to the availability of parental allowance and the expansion of childcare opportunities and all-day schools, it has become easier in recent years to reconcile family and working life in Germany. Since 2007, the rate of gainful employment among mothers in Germany has risen. Whereas in 2007, only

42 percent of mothers whose children were between two and three years old were gainfully employed, the number had risen to 55 percent by 2013. In addition, in 2013, more mothers had working times of between 15 and 32 hours per week, compared with 2007. According to a recent study, one out of three fathers in Germany would like to work part-time.

Families need good conditions so as to be able to organise family life according to their wishes. Differences still exist between the desired and actual working times as well as between the desired and actual childcare infrastructure. Disparities still exist between women and men in terms of earnings and financial security in old age. We need a modern working world with a new work culture, innovative forms of work and working time models.

Young women and men, mothers and fathers, need a family and equality policy that takes account of the changed desires and realities of daily life. The aim is to support the desire of women and men, mothers and fathers to divide family and professional work equally.

Family and equality policy are, in this instance, two faces of the same coin. With a modern and intelligently interwoven family and equality policy, women gain economic independence and sufficient income in old age; both women and men gain more time for the family and enterprises are able to gain professionals and to keep them. A modern family and equality policy relies on a reconciliation of family and working life based on partnership and a reduction in existing income and opportunity disparities between women and men.

With the idea of family working times, family allowance plus (as a first step in the direction of family working times), improved quality in childcare and a reduction in inequalities between women and men in pay and in working life, modern family and equality policy emphasises new aspects. Effective equality and family policy is also a question of social progress. Any policy that strengthens the concept of partnership strengthens equality, and vice versa. In this process, we need above all a fair division of resources and opportunities for mothers and fathers, and we need active fathers.

Thematic Workshops:

Workshop I: The Care Economy and progressive family policies – potentials for a sustainable economy and gender equal society

Dorota Szelewa

International Centre for Research and Analysis (ICRA), Warsaw, Poland

Gender and care: policy challenges and possible solutions

One of the central issues for the contemporary welfare research and policy-making is the problem of unpaid care work. The issue is also strongly gendered. In spite of the fact that women have been present on the labour market for decades, they are still predominantly responsible for performing care and domestic work within the family. The European countries have taken various positions with regard to the challenge of work-life balance for both women and men. Policy

responses include childcare services, as well as the systems of parental leave with adequate time reserved for both parents. However, what we can observe in Europe is a variety of solutions, even though there are EU-level actions, like Barcelona targets or legally binding standards with regard to parental leave. The goal of this presentation is to characterise policy challenges within the field of work-life balance and the gendered nature of care work. My argument is that there are three basic policy pillars that prove to provide more gender equality in the labour market and within the family. These are: 1) good quality childcare services, 2) individual entitlements for the fathers within the systems of parental leave and 3) working time arrangements. Apart from these concrete solutions, horizontal issues include: 1) recognizing diversity (new forms

of families, but also child-freedom), 2) recognizing unpaid reproductive work and 3) finding new ways of welfare state financing. Finally, I will argue that the policy solutions enhancing gender equality, especially with regard to care work, have important advantages from the economic point of view and that policy makers should treat these policies as one of the most crucial public.

Mette Kindberg

Member of the European Economic and Social Committee

Issues in gender and care

From my perspective – and from the perspective of the EESC there are a number of reasons, why we should take the issue of child care seriously. First, women all over Europe experience difficulties participating in the labour market on an equal footing with men. Today, women in most European countries are better educated than men. Yet they have fewer opportunities to get jobs and get paid less. Secondly, if Europe wants to achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, gender equality needs to be increased. We know that every time we decrease the gender pay gap by 1%, economic growth is increased by 0,1 %. Thirdly, Europe is getting older. We need more people to work. And in this perspective, women are a ‘resource’ that can be used much better than today. In other words there are both ethical and economic reasons to tackle the challenges of gender and care. In the EESC we have drafted recommendations on what can be done.

Among other things, we have to tackle the mental attitudes in our countries and combat stereotypes. Cleaning, taking care of the children and preparing dinner are NOT for women. They are for men AND women. In Denmark, we have come a long way, but there is still room for improvement. And this is a job for governments, civil society organisations and the

media. States should insure that child-care is affordable and available to all families. How and with what means is a question for each country to answer. But if we want to reach the EU target of 75 % employment rate by 2020, countries will simply have to deal with child care possibilities. And better possibilities for paternity leave. Finally, the EESC recommends developing services for families. Domestic work should be professionalized and states should help businesses develop in that market. This can be done, for instance by creating tax incentives for families that use such services. In this way we could combat a lot of undeclared work and create better working conditions. Further it would give more women the possibility of having a full time job. In conclusion, Europe needs more women to work. European countries, civil society organisations and we as individuals have a responsibility to make it happen.

Isabella Biletta

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EUROFOUND)

Building a Gender just society: Men and Women sharing parental and career responsibilities’

Current evolution across Europe shows a development of dual earners households. There is therefore an increasing need to address the issue of caring family responsibilities. Nevertheless the division of tasks between men and women still exists in the family as well as in the professional sphere. This means that women still perform the largest part of unpaid and care work, even when they work full time (Cinderella syndrome). Work life balance is still difficult to achieve in Europe today, more for men than for women. There is a business case for family friendly working time arrangements in companies and flexi time (ECS) should be definitely introduced as one of the possible ways to start increasing the equilibrium between work and family life.

Workshop II: Digital Economy – Gender equality and the potentials and risks of digitalization and technological change

Ursula Huws

Professor, Labour and Globalisation, University of Hertfordshire Business School

Digital Economy – Gender equality and the potentials and risks of digitalization and technological change

ICTs have had a major impact on the content and location of work. Digitization of information has transformed labour processes whilst telecommunications have enabled jobs to be relocated globally. But ICTs have also enabled the creation of entirely new types of ‘digital’ or ‘virtual’ labour, both paid and unpaid, shifting the borderline between ‘play’ and ‘work’ and creating new types of unpaid labour connected with consumption and co-creation of services. This affects private life as well as transforming the nature of work. Because of the gender division of labour, this affects women and men differently. This presentation will draw on the work of the COST Action IS 1202 on

‘the dynamics of virtual work’ and material from Ursula Huws’s forthcoming book, ‘Labour in the Global Digital Economy: the cybertariat comes of age’ to highlight some of the ways in which the spread of digital media is transforming work, both paid and unpaid, and the new challenges this raises for gender justice.

Vicki Kolovou

Founder of the Platform „Mobile Monday Athens“, Greece

Women Who Code. Why, in the era of plausible digital gender masking, did women have to part?

We examine why women decided to cover the gender gap in programming by setting themselves and their skills even further apart from men. In a developing technology enhanced future, where more and more people with technology and programming skills are needed, we ask what are the special circumstances that may require separate education for girls in the field?

Workshop III: The Gendered Face of Migration

Kyoko Shinozaki

Senior Lecturer, Sociology/Organisation, Migration, Participation, Faculty of Social Science, Ruhr-University Bochum

Gender and migration in the European labour market

What are the main contours of labour migration and mobility into the contemporary European labour market from a gender perspective? This paper first examines the relationship between gender and skill levels of both female and male migrants in this time of (highly) skilled labour shortages, showing continuities and discontinuities in terms of gendered constructions of skills in the past few decades. Secondly, it zooms in on the social reproductive sector, home and residential care, where women migrants predominate, paying

attention not only to the migration and mobility regime but also how this intersects with the other policy regimes of welfare and care. While this institutional mechanism can explain the structural factors creating demands for specific migrant labour force, it nonetheless overlooks at least two aspects. First it falls short of understanding the ‘sending’ context and migrants’ simultaneous embeddedness in multiple localities across borders. Second, rather than considering incorporation only from the perspective from ‘above’, it is important to underscore the ways in which migrant women and men working in racialized and feminized sectors negotiate their living and working conditions owing to their precarious (often irregular) migration status, and how they enact their migrant citizenship through activating various networks and social and political mobilization.

Merel Terlien

Coordinator of the European Network of Migrant Women (ENoMW)

Migration is not specifically a women's issue – it affects both women and men. However, it has a different impact on the lives of women and men. ENoMW pleads for gender sensitive migration policies in order to capture these gendered dynamics.

Migrant women are not a homogenous group. There are many internal differences which have to do with, amongst other issues, resident status, ethnicity, religion and class.

Notwithstanding this variety ENoMW distinguishes three main groups of migrant women in the EU: (I) women who migrate alone in order to work (both EU migrants and Third Country Nationals); (II) women who accompany their spouse (both EU migrants and TCNs) and (III) refugees/asylum seekers (TCNs).

Especially Third Country National migrant women are in a precarious position. Some of them do not have a resident permit and consequently they do not have access to the official labour market and to social security. Their well-being is to a great extent dependent on the good will of their employer. The situation of TCN women with a resident permit is legally much better although there remain fundamental issues. The resident permits of women who migrate to the EU for work are directly linked to their work contract. As soon as they lose their job they need to leave the country. TCN women who accompany their spouse are in many EU countries not entitled to work. This leaves them financially dependent and vulnerable to violence and abuse.

Marieke Koning

Policy Advisor, Gender Equality Unit, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

ITUC's position on migration and labour rights

The historical adoption of ILO Convention No. 189 and Recommendation No. 201 in 2011 created momentum to advance the rights of the 50 to 100 million domestic workers, the majority who are women and many who are migrant women workers and children. The increased demand for domestic workers had a profound impact on the feminization of migration globally and in Europe. Domestic workers provide care and other services to private households. Since domestic work was not valued and not considered as 'work' it was systematically excluded from national labour laws for decades. This led to the exploitation and abuse of millions of women workers including migrant women workers: poor payment or non-payment of wages, extreme long working hours without periods of rest, no access to social protection and no right to one day of rest a week. The adoption of ILO Convention No. 189 marks a turning point as it provides a minimum standard for the rights domestic workers should enjoy such as the right to a minimum wage, regulation of working time, access to social protection, measures to prevent the abuse of domestic workers, access to justice and regulation of employment agencies. It contains specific provisions to protect migrant domestic workers. With the help of ITUC's 12 by 12 campaign (initially aiming at 12 ratifications of ILO Convention No. 189) a global domestic workers movement was born, comprised of trade unions, domestic workers unions and organisations and human-, migrant- and women's rights organisations. It sparked mobilizations and advocacy campaigns to secure rights and protection for domestic workers in more than 90 countries. In Europe, migrant domestic workers communities, trade unions and their allies called for ratification of the Convention since they considered it as a strategic tool to win respect, rights and protection for migrant domestic workers. This led to innovative actions and lobby tactics of migrant domestic workers across Europe. The ITUC campaign continues as the '12 +12' campaign now aiming at 24 ratifications.

Workshop IV: Gender equality as an engine to modernization: Advancing gender equality in EU policies and funding to stimulate growth and social progress in Europe

Manuela Geleng

*Head of Unit, ESF Policy and Legislation,
DG Employment, European Commission*

Many of the current and future employment challenges have gendered roots and implications. In order for the European Social Fund, and the other European Structural and Investment Funds, to be effective, a gender perspective must be taken into account when addressing its key themes and actions.

Anne-Charlott Callerstig

*Gender Expert of the GenderCoP and Researcher at the
Centre for Feminist Social studies (CFS), Örebro University*

“Getting the job done – implementing equality policies on a daily basis”

What factors impact on the daily implementation of equality policies in public sector organisations? What do we know from research and the experience of

gender equality practitioners about the work to turn policy into action? How can the implementation be supported and what obstacles are there to overcome?

This presentation examines these questions based on studies of one of Sweden’s largest national initiatives on gender mainstreaming (2009-2014) and experiences from working with gender equality practitioners in the European Social Fund (ESF) across Europe. Different types and levels of conflict, together and interlinked with different ambiguities, affect the practical work to implement equality strategies where dilemmas inherent in the concepts of “gender”, “equality” and “change” become central. The results suggests that different equality strategies have different conditions for their implementation, and furthermore, that the conditions might change over time. Overall, the presentation shows how the specific preconditions for implementation of gender mainstreaming make the local arenas of implementation crucial for understanding the outcomes.

Closing speech: Shaping a European agenda for gender justice and sustainable growth: The way forward

Alison E. Woodward

*Research Professor, Institute for European Studies,
Vrije Universiteit Brussel*

Shaping the European agenda for gender justice and achieving sustainable growth today occurs in a landscape of both challenges and opportunities. Thanks to decades of political mobilization, European women activists have wide networks across political parties, countries, institutions and the grass roots which provide them with knowledge and support. Further, Europeans see gender justice as a core European value, even if many think that it has already been achieved. However, gender justice is still a vision, and especially so in today’s climate of economic austerity and global uncertainties. Fighting for gender equality has been a long struggle, and activists suffer from fatigue, lack of

funds and defensiveness in a climate of fear. The presentations of the conference illuminated the numerous opportunities for continuing to build and realize a path towards gender equity and justice, but also the challenges. Narrow visions of what the European economy should include that exclude the contributions of women are a threat to progressive projects. The political turn to the right in the European Parliament and many European member states produces old recipes that reinforce inequalities. Changes in government have led to the dismantling of institutions working for gender equality. These developments produce serious roadblocks for moving towards equality. Given the good experiences in Europe such as including fathers in care and progressive family policies and the demonstrably positive effects of such policies on economic productivity, the situation could be promis-

ing. The agenda for tomorrow must continue to focus on an expanded view of economics with a feminist face, and concern for sustainable and inclusive development. Particularly important is the need to include women and men from many different identities in a common sustainable project. Opportunities such as the preparations for a global conference following up the United Nations 1995 Platform for Action in Beijing

are a way to develop the agenda. A progressive European agenda for gender justice needs to seriously address the problem of sustainability in a global framework. It needs to search for mechanisms for motivating men and women as human beings to develop a common understanding that with just gender relations the knowledge and resources for creating a sustainable future will be available.

Reading suggestions

- CALLERSTIG, A.-C. (2014). Making equality work: Ambiguities, conflict and change agents in the implementation of equality policies in public sector organisations. Linköping Studies in Arts and Science, No. 607. Linköping University, Department of Thematic Studies – Gender Studies.
Available at: <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:704692/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- EUROFOUND (2013). Women, men and working conditions in Europe. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
Available at: http://eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2013/49/en/1/EF1349EN.pdf.
- EUROFOUND (2012). Fifth European Working Conditions Survey. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
Available at: http://eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2011/82/en/1/EF1182EN.pdf.
- EUROFOUND (2012). Working time and work–life balance in a life course perspective. Eurofound, Dublin.
Available at: http://eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2012/73/en/1/EF1273EN.pdf.
- EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (2014). A New Strategy for Gender Equality Post 2015. Workshop for the FEMM Committee. DG Internal Policies, Policy Dept. C, PE 509.984. Available at: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2014/509984/IPOL_STU%282014%29509984_EN.pdf.
- EYDOUX, A., MATH, A. & PÉRIVIER, H. (Eds.) (2014). European Labour Markets In Times Of Crisis. A Gender Perspective. Revue de l'OFCE, n° 133.
Available at: <http://www.ofce.sciences-po.fr/pdf/revue/133/revue-133.pdf>.
- FRA – European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014). Violence against women: an EU-wide survey – Main results. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg.
Available at: http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-main-results_en.pdf.
- FRASER, N. (2013). Fortunes of feminism: From state-managed capitalism to neoliberal crisis. Verso Books.
- HANSEN, S. & ANDERSEN, L. (2014). A Gendered Investment Plan. Foundation for European Progressive Studies. Economic Policy Brief, No.2. Available at: <http://www.feps-europe.eu/assets/73f79ad5-23f2-4a69-aae5-41b5745e9d02/2014-18-2-pb-no-2-a-gendered-investment-plan-eclm-feps.pdf>.
- Mouvement Mondial des Mères-Europe (2011). What Matters to Mothers in Europe – Survey of Mothers in Europe. Brussels. Available at:
http://www.mmmeurope.org/ficdoc/2011-MMM_BROCHURE_What_Matters_Mothers_Europe.pdf.
- OECD (2008). Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries. OECD Publishing.
- OECD (2011). Divided We Stand: Why Inequality Keeps Rising. OECD Publishing.
- PIKETTY, T. (2014). Capital in the Twenty-first Century. Harvard University Press.
- TIJDENS, K.G., VAN KLAVEREN, M. (2012). Frozen in time: Gender pay gap unchanged for 10 years. ITUC Equality Department, Brussels. Available at: http://www.ituc-csi.org/IMG/pdf/pay_gap_en_final.pdf.
- WILKINSON, R. & PICKETT, K. (2009). The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better. Allen Lane, London.

The Authors

Petra Ahrens

(PhD, Humboldt University Berlin), is Postdoctoral Researcher at the Chair of Sociology of Work and Gender Relations at the Department of Social Sciences of the Humboldt University in Berlin. She is a member of Gender Mainstreaming Experts International (GMEI).

Serena D'Agostino

is Doctoral Researcher at the Institute for European Studies (IES) and the Department of Political Science of the Free University of Brussels (VUB). She is part of the joint research programme "Evaluating Democratic Governance in Europe" (EDGE) and affiliated to the IES cluster "Migration, Diversity & Justice".

Alison Woodward

(PhD, University of California, Berkeley) is Research Professor at the Free University of Brussels (VUB) and co-director emerita of RHEA, the Center for Gender Studies and Diversity Research. She is a Senior Associate of the Institute for European Studies at the VUB.