

FEMINA POLITICA

ZEITSCHRIFT FÜR FEMINISTISCHE POLITIKWISSENSCHAFT

Call for Papers

20 Years Treaty of Amsterdam – European Equality Policies Revisited

2017 signifies the 20th anniversary of the Treaty of Amsterdam, and with that, the supranational inclusion of gender equality as a horizontal policy issue by way of Gender Mainstreaming, and along with the embrace of anti-discrimination policies. During the twenty years since member-states ratified the treaty, the European gender regime has transcended by far the limits of Article 119 (Treaty of Rome 1957) which restricted Community involvement to employment policies. It now includes the ability to address issues like combatting violence against women, gender equity in relation to research, securing equal representation in decision-making, the reconciliation of work and private life, and efforts to avoid multiple discrimination.

In its special issue marking this anniversary, Femina Politica aims to reflect upon the function of supranational legislation for equality policies in the light of the current economic, fiscal and democratic crises afflicting the EU. On the one hand, this means examining institutionalised political strategies such as Gender Mainstreaming, anti-discrimination and equality-oriented approaches to civil society organisations. It is time to analyse the impact of supranational equality policies in different EU policy arenas and at different levels of European governance, on the other. The special issue will therefore include papers that seek to assess the status quo of gender equality and anti-discrimination efforts within the EU and its member states and their future prospects for implementation. We would especially welcome articles that focus on the following topics:

Stories of Gender Mainstreaming

The history of Gender Mainstreaming in the EU covers a variety of interpretations. The most common one describes Gender Mainstreaming as having first evolved in the field of development policies prior to having been adopted internationally at the 1995 Beijing Women's World Conference and its Platform for Action. The European Union and its member states expressly supported the strategy; effective lobbying by women's organisations and female parliamentarians subsequently managed to secure the inclusion of Gender Mainstreaming in the 1997 Amsterdam Treaty.

Looking back on the history of Gender Mainstreaming we ask:

- What has become of the Amsterdam Treaty obligations? How are they reflected in subsequent EU treaties, and how should the strategy's effectiveness be judged today in view of its history?
- In the early 1990s, Gender Mainstreaming was also intended as a vehicle for mitigating the negative effects of an ever more neoliberal common market and for overcoming an ensuing legitimacy crisis, that is, by strengthening the EU's social

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dimension. The ongoing economic, fiscal and debt crises facing member states, added to the extension of austerity politics, challenge the social dimension in old and new ways. Is Gender Mainstreaming still relevant against this background? If so, to what extent and in what respects?

- What specific equality policies are still being actively pursued by the different EU institutions, and how do they either reinforce or hinder each other? Under what conditions do they provide an appropriate “fit” with strategies pursued at different levels – supranationally, nationally, regionally or locally?
- Are there new supranational coalitions and/or strategies that can be used to strengthen (intersectional) equality policies? How are they connected to Gender Mainstreaming, or in what ways do they critically distance themselves from Gender Mainstreaming?

Gender Mainstreaming, Anti-discrimination and other Political Equality Strategies

Scholars thus far have pointed to different stages during which political actors engage with the Gender Mainstreaming strategy. Initially, efforts to link Gender Mainstreaming and earlier equality strategies, to assess its 'correct' implementation, its relationship to women's and gender studies, and to operationalize its transformative claim rested at the centre of the debate. Following the first implementation efforts, researchers shifted their attention to evaluating its implementation, outcomes and its actual transformative potential; they also examined experiences with the transfer of Gender Mainstreaming processes from one policy domain to another, and from one institutional context to another.

Efforts to implement the Treaty's anti-discrimination mandate, on the other hand, had a slower start; it entered the supranational arena in the 1990s, not only to combat racism but also in response to right-wing nationalist gains à la Jörg Haider. In addition to sex, race and ethnic origin, Article 13 AT covered religion/belief, (dis)ability, age and sexual orientation. Subsequent debates have been dominated by questions as to what kinds of discrimination tend to occur in different societal sectors, and whether or not recent EU directives have created a hierarchy of discriminations. This leads us to pose following core questions:

- What conditions are necessary in order to avoid establishing hierarchies of discrimination in different policy fields when implementing Gender Mainstreaming, anti-discrimination and other equality strategies?
- How are member states implementing EU gender equality and anti-discrimination policies? Does their 'translation' of EU policies into national policies likewise lead to hierarchies of discrimination?
- What role does intersectionality play in implementing supranational equality and anti-discrimination policies? How can we explain the significance or possibly the neglect of intersectionality problems in this process?

Equality strategies beyond the mainstream

The slow institutionalization of Gender Mainstreaming has also triggered many criticisms, some more compelling than others. Some scholars have criticized the term itself as ill-defined, leading to routinized 'check-off' lists or generic forms of implementation that fall very short of detailed Gender Impact Assessments. A more serious charge is that it confirms pre-existing sexual binaries, homogenising and stereotyping 'women' and 'men'. Others have objected that Gender Mainstreaming has been implemented almost exclusively in the public administration domain, controlled predominantly by so-called gender experts. Further

questions arise with regard to anti-discrimination: Do Gender Mainstreaming actions effectively target multiple discrimination or intersectionality? In this area, we are particularly interested in articles addressing the following questions:

- Is Gender Mainstreaming dead, and if yes, is that a good or bad thing? Are there more promising alternatives on the horizon?
- What form could or should a timely equality policy take, allowing us to combine and intertwine the dynamics of equality, difference and deconstruction?
- How should we conceptualise intersectionality in relation to equality and anti-discrimination policies? What consequences would this hold for institutional and civil society actions?
- How can one attempt to reconcile the contradictory logics driving EU austerity politics and equality policies?

For the special issue we welcome theoretical as well as empirical articles. We recommend that authors consult with the special issue editors prior to submitting papers that address current events or practical policy considerations, for possible inclusion in the daily politics feature section.

Abstracts and Contact

Petra Ahrens, Alexandra Scheele and Anna van der Vleuten (guest editor) are the supporting editors for this issue. Abstracts of one or two pages should be sent to petra.ahrens@sowi.hu-berlin.de and scheele-baer@b-tu.de by 15 October 2015. As a feminist journal promoting women inside and outside academia *Femina Politica* will prioritize qualified abstracts by women.

Submission Deadline for Contributions

The editors will select contributions from the abstracts and invite authors to submit full papers until 30 October 2015. The deadline for manuscripts between 35,000 and 40,000 characters (including spaces, notes, and bibliography), prepared for anonymous review, is 28 February 2016. Information concerning the author should only be given on the title page. All manuscripts are reviewed by external reviewers and editors. The reviews will be returned by 15 May 2015.

Open Section Forum

In addition to the topic of Gender Relations in Eastern Europe, this issue of *Femina Politica* provides the opportunity to publish original manuscripts from the field of gender-sensitive political science in the journal's section Forum. Articles should have 20,000 to 25,000 characters (including spaces, notes, and biography) and should either provide access to important research findings or be involved around contemporary debates in feminist research. Abstracts of one or two pages should be sent to redaktion@femina-politica.de. The final selection will be based on the full-length paper.

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