



Quality in Gender+ Equality Policies

European Commission Sixth Framework Programme
Integrated Project

Final STRIQ Report

Deliverable No. 62

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Vienna

2009

1. Introduction

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This Deliverable presents the final STRIQ report of the QUING project. It brings together the conceptual work (Deliverable no. 13, Deliverable no. 14, and Deliverable no. 42), reflections on the empirical work that led to the 30 STRIQ reports (*Deliverable no. 35: Series of reports analysing intersectionality in gender equality policies for each country and the EU*), and recommendations. STRIQ is the activity in the QUING project that studies how the intersection of multiple inequalities is addressed in gender+ equality policies across the European Union and its Member States, including the study of occurrences of intersectional bias. The specific aims of the STRIQ activity are (Objective 1 of the QUING project) to ‘conceptualize the relationships between different inequalities, especially between gender, race/ ethnicity, religion, class and sexuality’, and (Objective 5) to ‘assess the content and quality of gender+ equality policies in the EU’s multicultural context’.

One of the aims of QUING is not only to describe the gender equality policies in the EU Member States in the context of the European Union, but also to analyse the degree to which other inequalities than gender are relevant in these policies, and how these are dealt with. Do gender equality policies address the intersection of gender with other inequalities and how does the way that this intersectionality is dealt with (or not) affect the quality of gender equality policies in Europe? Within QUING, our aim was to assess evidence of the extent and quality of gender+ equality policies: policies that have a ‘plus’, that integrate attention to intersecting inequalities in a way that does not detract from attention to structural gender inequality. For policy practice, this is one of the most urgent requirements in the coming years. At this moment, not only the European Union but a growing number of countries state that they want to address the various inequalities in one set of policy measures. While it is often stated that gender equality policies are the most developed inequality policies, and hence should be the basis for recommendations that build upon these experiences, policy practice is more complex, and not always fully built on an evidence base. Hence the need to provide an evidence-based assessment of how gender equality policies address inequalities in addition to gender.

The report consists of four chapters. After this introduction, the second chapter (by Sylvia Walby, Jo Armstrong and Sofia Strid) presents a conceptual framework, building and expanding on the current theoretical work on the interconnectedness of various inequalities, in order to understand the relevance of intersectionality debates for the analysis of gender equality policies. This is an important component in the assessment of the quality of gender equality policies.

The third chapter presents reflections on the ‘good practices’ in gender+ equality policies that have been identified and analyzed in the QUING project. The analytical work done for each country has shown the range of inequalities other than gender that receive attention in gender equality policies, the ways in which these inequalities are understood to relate to gender inequality, and the implications of this for the quality of these policies. The reflections are based on the conceptual framework as it has developed during the QUING project, resulting from a literature review and analysis (Deliverable No. 13: Report (theory) of

intersectionality, Walby 2007), research guidelines (Deliverable No. 14: Research guidelines for the analysis of intersectionality elements in LARG and WHY, Walby 2007) and discussions within the QUING research team, including the researchers who have been doing the country analyses. These accounts of 'good practices' were presented earlier in Deliverable No. 45: Conceptual framework of inclusive equality policies, including good practices (Verloo and the QUING team 2009).

The fourth chapter of the report presents recommendations for gender+ equality policies. These recommendations will be subject to further revisions during the last period of the QUING research.

2. Conceptual framework

Sylvia Walby, Jo Armstrong and Sofia Strid

The second chapter describes the innovative conceptual framework that has been produced in order to analyse equality policies in a multicultural context. It draws on and goes beyond *D42: Conceptual framework for gender+ equality policies in a multicultural context*, which brought together the work that had started with *D13: Report (theory) on intersectionality*, and *D14: Research guidelines for the analysis of intersectionality elements in LARG and WHY*.

2.1 Introduction

This paper develops the conceptual framework needed for the analysis of the intersection of multiple inequalities. This is necessary for the effective evaluation of gender+ equality policies in the context of a multi-cultural Europe.

Feminist analysis has moved beyond the longstanding critique of the focus on class in classical sociology, beyond the construction of a sub-field of gender parallel to sub-fields of ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion and towards the theoretical recognition of the importance of the intersection of multiple inequalities, although there remain significant differences as to how this should proceed (Acker 2000; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992; Bhopal 1997; Brah and Phoenix 2004; Collins 1998; Crenshaw 1991; Felski 1997; Hancock 2007; Hartmann 1976; Jakobsen 1998; Lundström 2006; Lykke 2004; McCall 2001, 2005; Medaglia 2000; Mirza 1997; Mohanty 1991; Phizacklea 1990; Phoenix and Pattynama 2006; Walby 2007, 2009; Verloo 2006; Yuval-Davis 2006).

There are five major theoretical dilemmas. First, how to conceptualise the intersecting entities, in a form summary enough to enable analysis, such as strands, categories or groups, while noting the complexities of internal divisions and ontological depth of each; how to balance the way that categories are neither fully stable nor infinitely fluid; and how bring the agency of the disadvantaged into focus without leaving the actions of the powerful in obscurity. Second, how to identify multiple intersecting entities without reducing each to a similar ontology; and how to neither leave class out of focus nor treat it as of overwhelming significance. Third, how to simultaneously identify the intersecting entities and recognise that their intersection changes them; how to capture the way that the relations between the

entities are neither fully separate nor visible nor fully reducible to each other. This has often been understood as mutual constitution, but might also be considered to be mutual shaping or adaptation. Fourth, how to capture detailed specificities of small groups at points of intersection without losing sight of the larger systems of social relations. Fifth, how to conceptualise and theorise the asymmetry between the intersecting entities, so as to avoid both the hegemony of one strand and of fragmentation into multiple equally important units.

2.2. Icons and starting points

Special attention is paid to three texts – Crenshaw (1991), McCall (2005) and Hancock (2007) – which have become leaders in the field of gender and intersectionality. While they conceptualise the relationship between multiple inequalities in different ways, they share a common starting point in the rejection of a singular focus on gender and generalisations from some women to all women (Mohanty 1991).

Crenshaw's (1991) iconic work in developing the field of intersectionality was not only a critique of the invisibility of black women, but simultaneously a critique of identity politics, with its over-stabilisation of discrete groups and categories. Invisibility at the point of two intersecting inequalities is raised as a problem by Crenshaw (1991) in her canonical text on intersectionality. This invisibility is regarded as a weakness for the gender equality project as well as for the anti-racist project. Crenshaw uses the concept of intersectionality to grasp the ways in which the interactions of gender and race limit Black women's access to the American labour market, and how a lack of understanding this intersection lead to the marginalisation of Black women and Black women's experiences (Crenshaw 1989). Crenshaw (1991: 1244) argues that the experiences faced by women of colour were 'not subsumed within the traditional boundaries of race or gender discrimination as these boundaries are currently understood'. She suggests that previous academic, political and civil societal engagements with the intersections of gender and race/ethnicity have not been sufficiently careful. Rather one identity category is treated as dominant; social power 'works to exclude or marginalise those who are different' (Crenshaw 1991: 1242). 'Contemporary feminist and antiracist discourses have failed to consider intersectional identities such as women of color' (Crenshaw 1991: 1243). Groups at the intersection of two or more identity categories are left out of focus in both analysis and politics; Black women, ethnic minority women, or 'women of colour', groups positioned at the intersection of gender and ethnicity, become marginalised as a group and 'face limited options of political communities formed either around ethnicity or around gender, rather than political action that engages with the particular difficulties at the intersection'. In the example of domestic violence, the experiences of African-American women are made invisible, with activists not supporting the public release of data on this group at the intersection of gender and ethnicity for fear that 'the statistics might permit opponents to dismiss domestic violence as a minority problem' (Crenshaw 1991: 1253). 'Women of color can be erased by the strategic silences of antiracism and feminism' (Crenshaw 1991: 1253).

Substantively, Crenshaw's analysis led the way to a host of studies of the particularities of groups at the point of intersection, which had been previously under-examined. Theoretical, her analysis led the way to consider groups at the point of intersection as mutual constituted, for example, by gender and ethnicity. Crenshaw's trenchant critique of the invisibility of

domestic violence against black women focuses on two main actors – white women and black men – for their hesitation at publicly identifying this violence, which could be used to further stigmatise the black community. In this focus on the agency of these two disadvantaged groups her analysis curiously loses sight of the actions of the powerful and the racist structures. Maintaining the focus on the larger structures is an issue raised by McCall (2005).

McCall (2005: 1773-4) identifies three approaches in the field of intersectionality: intracategorical, anticategorical, and intercategorical. The intracategorical is concerned to 'focus on particular social groups at neglected points of intersection' 'in order to reveal the complexity of lived experience within such groups', for example Crenshaw. The anticategorical is 'based on a methodology that deconstructs analytical categories'; it prioritises the destabilisation of categories. The intercategorical 'provisionally adopt[s] existing analytical categories to document relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of inequality among multiple and conflicting dimensions'. This is an important development, differentiating between different approaches to intersectionality. McCall recommends the inter-categorical, for its power in engaging with the larger structures. McCall's (2001) analysis is interesting for its attention to inequalities within the strands, not only between strands.

Hancock (2007) is critical of the stabilisation of categories for analysis. Hancock (2007: 64, 67) also builds a typology of approaches to intersectionality, but one different from McCall's. She identifies three approaches to the study of race, gender, class and other categories of difference: unitary, multiple and intersectional. In the unitary approach, only one category is examined, and it is presumed to be primary and stable. In the multiple approach, more than one category is addressed and these matter equally; the categories are presumed to be stable and to have stable relationships with each other. In the intersectional approach more than one category is addressed; the categories matter equally; the relationship between the categories is open; and the categories are dynamic not stable. Within this typology, Hancock places considerable emphasis on the issue of fluidity, suggesting that only in the last category is there any analytic presumption of fluidity of the categories. She presumes that a category is either dominant (unitary) or equal to other categories (multiple, intersectional); this omits any notion of asymmetry.

Crenshaw, McCall and Hancock have introduced some important themes in the field of debate concerning the relationship between strands that are neither fully separable nor reducible to each other; and categories that are neither fully stable nor infinitely fluid. The construction of typologies is necessarily a process that abstracts and reduces detail. In order to address these questions further, an additional set of themes needs to be brought more sharply into focus, concerning the nature of the strands and the conceptualisation of the processes of change in them as they intersect.

Dimensions of intersection of strands that need to be further considered include: the nature of the strands or categories that intersect; their ontology; the range of strands; and the forms of intersection of the strands. The tendency to reduce strands to similar kinds of categories or groups is critically examined. This involves investigating whether the significance of the social relations of inequality within each strands have tended to be obscured by this approach and whether insufficient attention is paid to the depth and diversity of the

ontologies of these systems of social relations. The range of strands that intersect with gender that are the focus of analysis has fluctuated in social theory, from early accounts of gender and class (Hartmann), to its gender and ethnicity (Crenshaw 1993) and to many diverse strands. We reconsider the relative neglect of class in recent texts. The ways that the inequality strands intersect is contested. There is a tendency in the debates for a priori theoretical reasoning to insist on a singular type of relationship between the strands. We consider here the development of a less normative, more empirically informed, typology. The issues at stake in this typology are the extent to which the inequalities are separate and in parallel, are additive, mutually shape each other, are mutually constitutive or infinitely fluid and varying. While normatively inflected theory has tended to focus on the mutual constitution of inequalities, this has tended to leave out of focus the way that multiple inequalities are actually addressed in the practice of politics and policy. These involve varied types of engagement between groups and between projects including competition, hierarchy, alliance and hegemony. Rather than the emerging orthodoxy that all strands are equally important, we consider whether some are more important than others, not only the possibility of symmetrical but also of asymmetrical relations between strands. Within these approaches there is a tension as to whether or not it is productive for the emancipatory quality of policy for each inequality and especially gender and ethnicity are to be always separately named and identified.

2.3. The ontology of strands

The conceptualisation of the intersecting entities has implications for how the intersection itself is understood. There are three parts to this, where there are options and tensions in the analysis. First, the extent to which the entity is treated as a unity and the extent to which its internal divisions and inequalities are brought to the fore. Second, the extent to which the entity is stabilised for purposes of analysis (strategic or analytic essentialism) and the extent to which fluidity and change in the categories are emphasised. Third, whether the range of forms of entities analysed are restricted to sets of social relations of inequality or extend to projects and fields as well.

Intersecting entities: Blocks or internally divided

The way that the entities that are intersecting are conceptualised has implications for the analysis of the intersection. In the context of the European Union equality policy the term 'strand' is commonly used, while in the US academic literature the most common term in use is 'category'. Hancock (2007) uses the term 'category' in her summary table. McCall (2005) organises her typology around whether writers are anti, intra- or inter-category. Crenshaw uses concept of intersectional groups to challenge the concept of 'identity' that underlies identity politics, and most often speaks of 'women of color'. The use of these terms does not focus on the nature of the social relations within the category, but rather the relations between categories.

One of the problems with this approach is curiously a neglect of the power of the actions of the dominant group within the category. The analysis of intersectionality has often focused on the actions of the disadvantaged groups. For example, a focus on the actions of white women rather than white men in the context of an intersectional issue facing black women.

Indeed Crenshaw (1993: 1258) in her analysis of violence by black men against black women states 'Not only do race-based priorities function to obscure the problem of violence suffered by women of color; feminist concerns often suppress minority experiences as well.' However, such an approach inappropriately ignores the role of the more powerful groups in these divisions. In relation to issues of ethnicity, it is important not to neglect the role of racists in the politics of silencing ethnic minority women in issues of domestic violence. Noting the importance of the powerful in each of the intersection might shift some of the focus from the inactions of white feminists to the actions of white racists. Indeed it is hard to understand such silencing outside of an account of the racist structuring of the policy terrain.

The importance of the powerful also in relation to the intersection of gender and class. Employers' bodies have sometimes played important roles in the construction of gender equality policies and institutions. Most of the first wave of countries that integrated their equality commissions into a single body (O'Connell 2002) were countries where the balance of power between organised employers and organised workers was tilted more towards employers. In the UK, the only body that really wanted a single equalities body was the employers' body, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI 2003). By contrast, the separate equality commissions ranged from reluctant acquiescence (gender) to opposition (disability), softened by the offer of special provisions (a separate committee within the EHRC for disability). Further there is a tendency for employers to seek to narrow the equality agenda to one based around the removal of illegitimate discrimination so as to secure equal opportunities, pulling away from the broader goal of securing equality of outcome, which lies at the heart of the gender mainstreaming strategy.

The implication of these points is that it is important to conceptualise 'strand' as a set of social relations of inequality, and not to treat as a category where the focus is on the category as a whole or on only the disadvantaged people within it. It is important not to ignore the role of the powerful within sets of unequal social relations when the attention is focused on the intersection between them.

Ontology and change

There is a tension in the analyses of intersecting entities as to whether these are stabilised for analysis or understood as continuously fluid and changing, with implications for whether their intersection is conceptualised as mutually shaping or mutually constitutive. An underlying issue is how temporality is positioned in the analysis, whether entities that have been subject to change historically can be temporarily stabilised for analysis in the present.

Hancock (2007) is critical of approaches to the relations between multiple inequalities that stabilise the categories. Indeed only analyses that treat categories as fluid are considered by her to be 'intersectional'. For some writers concerned with difference, this concern for fluidity extends to a rejection of all categories and a promotion of the fluidity and ever changing nature of social relations, drawing on postmodern and poststructuralist analysis, using metaphors such as nomad (Braidotti 1994), sometimes even rejecting the concept of agency as too stabilising in preference for the notion of the performative (Butler 1990). But such destabilisation makes actual analysis rather hard (Felski 1997; Sayer 1997). McCall, by contrast, uses stabilised macro categories in order to analyse 'inter-categorical' intersectionality.

In order to understand the relationship between strands it is necessary to understand the nature, or ontology, of the strands themselves. The ontology of the strand needs to be specified in order to be able to address the nature of the relationship between strands. However, it is common for the ontology of the strand to be left out of focus, with most of the attention being placed on the relations between the strands. The consequence of this focus of attention is that the ontology of the strand is often too shallow and stable. This results in the strands being treated in practice as if they were relatively stable categories, even though most of the writers in the field would prefer not to make this mistake. Most writers within the field of 'intersectionality' see a problem in the tendency to over-stabilise the categories, though to significantly varying degrees.

The way forward here is to systematically address the ontological depth of each of the strands, analyse their historical dynamics, while at any point in time temporarily stabilising the categories for analysis. Each strand is best understood as a set of social relations; it is a regime of inequality. It is spread across the four major institutional domains of economy, polity, violence and civil society. In order to address the intersection of strands, it is necessary to do so across all the domains, in order to address its ontological depth. Otherwise the analysis is flattened to a single dimension (Walby 2007, 2009).

Strands, projects and fields

While many concerns of intersectionality writers focus on sets of unequal social relations, this is not the full extent of the entities involved. Not all intersectionality issues concern directly sets of social relations in the way discussed so far. There are also projects and policy fields, which are informed by but not reducible to strands, and policy.

As Crenshaw (1993) notes structural intersectionality is not the same as political intersectionality. There are many actually existing intersections in social structure, but only some of these become the focus of political and policy attention. The relationship between 'structural intersection' to 'political intersection' (Crenshaw 1991) and reasons for the selection of some intersectional strands and not others as political relevant is significant to the analysis of intersectionality in equality policies.

A focus on the different constructions of policy projects and arenas provides additional insights to the analysis. Here there is interest in the implications of intersectionality for the constitution of the project and indeed of the policy field itself (rather than only the clients within that policy field). An example is the extension of the policy field of gender-based violence to include forced marriage, in which the constitution of the policy arena itself is structured by the approach to intersectionality within the policy terrain. There are projects where differently constituted civil society groups come together, for example, in the project to end child poverty in the UK, or to promote human rights. In many public services, such as health and education, there are policy fields that are informed by the interests of multiple equality strands, but which are not reducible to any one.

2.4 Identification of relevant strands: rethinking class

Much of the contemporary theoretical debate on intersectionality has been concerned with the intersection of gender and ethnicity (Crenshaw 1991; Mirza 1997; Collins 1998; Medaglia 2000). The inclusion of more than two axes of inequality is often seen as desirable, especially gender, ethnicity and class (Davis 1981; Westwood 1984; Phizacklea 1990; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992; Collins 1998). In an EU context, it might be that six inequality strands are to be considered the most important. The EU Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999 and the consequent Directives to implement it name six grounds for legal action on illegal discrimination, not only the previous gender, ethnicity and disability, but additionally age, religion/belief and sexual orientation (European Commission 2007/9). There is a particular question as to whether the intersection of gender and religion is becoming more important because of the increased political prominence of Islam (Vakulenko 2007), perhaps reinterpreting some of the previous interest in the intersection of gender and ethnicity. In this new legal and policy context, further intersections may become of importance. The simultaneous recognition of more than two inequalities is becoming more common, perhaps as a consequence of the EU recognising these additional three grounds for litigation for equality.

There are further possible relevant intersections. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights 2000 Article 21 lists seven additional grounds of social origin, genetic features, language, political or other opinion, membership of a national minority, property and birth. While these are not currently activated by EU Directives, they have been appended to the Treaty of Lisbon and some EU Member States already include some additional grounds, for example, Ireland and Hungary.

In addition there are key differences that do not take the form of inequality strands, such as parental and partner status. There are further divides that emerge as important in policy discussions that are not best conceptualised as sets of social relations linked to structural inequalities. These include differences in parental and partner status, e.g. lone mothers (Ford and Millar 1998). The understanding of these issues is aided by the distinctions introduced by the debates on intersectionality even though these are not structural inequalities.

A most important and unduly neglected inequality is that of class, although this is not a justiciable inequality in the same way as the other six and has some important ontological dissimilarity with them. The intersection of gender and class is important yet relatively neglected in current debates. In earlier debates there was considerable interest in the intersection of gender and class relations (Hartmann 1976; Acker 2000), but this has faded, though not entirely disappeared (McCall 2005). Class is not a justiciable strand under EU legislation, while US writings have often (though not always) focused on ethnicity and race. However, class is an important aspect of the structuring of inequalities, intersecting in complex ways with all inequality strands. It is important in the structuring of the employment laws and institutional machinery of tribunals and courts that implement these laws. The implementation of the laws on non-class justiciable inequalities takes place in institutions that were originally established to secure justice and good relations for class-based relations between employers and employees. The institutions of tribunals and courts are still primarily shaped by class in the composition of the decision-makers which includes representatives of

employers and workers as well as independent legal experts; they are not composed of representatives of men and women, black and white, disabled and abled. Issues of discrimination in pay and working conditions are still central to legal interventions in inequalities, despite their extension to the supply of goods and services. Class has continuing effects on the equality architecture.

2.5 Relations between the strands

The heart of the debates on intersectionality concerns the relations between the strands. These are split into three for ease of discussion: whether the strands are to be treated as equal or asymmetrical; whether they are mutually constituting or only mutually shaping; and the issue of visibility of separate strands. One of the difficulties with the typologies of intersectionality, as perhaps with all typologies, is that they abstract from the detail and conflate distinctions in order to construct a limited number of types that appear to be significantly different from each other. In this section these typologies, especially that of Hancock, are deconstructed into a larger number of elements, then reconstructed.

Equal or asymmetrical?

In some accounts of intersectionality, all the inequalities are treated equally. However, this is not consistent with the structuring of the real world.

In the relations between the categories in Hancock's typology, either one is dominant (unitary) or they are equally important (multiple, intersectional). Indeed for Hancock, the claim that categories are of equal importance is of considerable significance. She is scathing about 'Oppression Olympics', in which some inequalities claim to be more unequal than others. For example, the construction of a hierarchy of strands in equality politics is regarded as a pernicious practice to the detriment of equality overall.

An alternative approach is to see the relations between different strands as highly varied, and not fitting neatly into a dichotomy of 'dominant' or 'equal'. This is the outcome of varied processes of competition and alliance of social groups and projects. Different equality groups may have different priorities for the use of resources and the shaping of the definition of an ostensibly common equality project. These may result in competition, alliance, hierarchy or hegemony. Rather than taking a normatively critical stance towards the unequal power of the strands, as in Hancock's (2007) distaste for an 'Oppression Olympics', the issue is to analyse the actual inequalities of power between them, so as to understand their implications.

There are different forms of competition among equality strands, ranging from competitive political organising to active and acrimonious hostility. There has been concern that the integration of policy machinery for different equality strands will lead to greater competition for a superior place in a hierarchy of inequality strands, that competition would become more important than cooperation (Bell 2004; Verloo 2006). One way route to the development of a hierarchy of equality strands occurs when groups associated with some strands have stronger legal powers for remedying discrimination than others (Hepple et al 2000; Bell 2004). There can be competition for resources between strands within a single equalities

body, as for example was felt by feminists during the early development of the Northern Ireland Single Equalities Body (O'Connell 2002).

An example of discursively organised competition between strands is that of the agenda surrounding 'choice', which is currently associated with the neoliberal project, but has at some times been adopted by feminists, as in 'a woman's right to choose'. The choice agenda can be used in opposition to the agenda of equality in circumstances where women are deemed to have freely chosen options even though they have implications for greater inequality (Hakim 1991). For example, if women freely choose specific jobs because they are 'caring' and have part-time hours; then they can be described within the choice agenda as if they have simultaneously accepted the associated lower pay. The agenda of choice can also in some circumstances invoke the discourse of 'diversity', which tends to prioritise difference over equality (Hankivsky 2004). This means that 'choices' made on the basis of 'diversity' may be claimed to take priority over claims on the basis of equality. Other forms of competition can involve a sharper clash of values, as for example, in the UK in 2007, when Churches fought the application of anti-discrimination laws to adoption by gay couples.

Rather than competition, the relations between social groups may involve those of alliance (Jakobsen 1998), coalition (Ferree and Hess 1996) or network (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Moghadam 2005). In addition they may take the form of a shared project, as in the case of some forms of social democracy (Huber and Stephens 2001). Some alliances cross the boundary between state and civil society, as in the important alliances identified between elected women politicians, feminist bureaucrats, and feminists in civil society such as academics and activists (Halsaa 1998; Vargas and Wieringa 1998; Veitch 2005) sometimes in 'velvet triangles' (Woodward 2004). The development of practices and institutions at the inter-face of state and civil society is important in increasing the impact of feminist developments in civil society on the state.

Alliances and coalitions often involve partners that are asymmetrical in their resources. This may mean that one strand or project (such as class) may achieve hierarchy or hegemony over the others. The movement of an equality project into the mainstream in order to secure the resources of the mainstream for the equality project is a common if contested practice (Walby 2005). If successful, there are rewards for the equality project. However, there is a risk that the equality project merely becomes absorbed or integrated into the mainstream, eroding its own project (Jahan 1995). A parallel issue emerges if several equality projects merge: they may each gain from the support of the others; but it is also the case that one can become hegemonic at the expense of the rest.

In contemporary policy discussions, class, while rarely specified as a set of social relations, frequently emerges as part of agendas concerning social exclusion, poverty, vulnerability and disadvantage. Indeed such agendas, while not naming specific social relations, are often powerfully inflected by an economically led conception of generic economic disadvantage. Perhaps social exclusion might be seen as a 'soft class' led agenda. Indeed in some instances, there is a tendency for multiple inequalities to be reduced to 'social exclusion' rather than being separately identified.

The implications of the varying forms of competition, cooperation, hierarchy and hegemony between strands, between projects and between policy fields are challenging for theories of

intersectionality. It challenges the search for a single best way of characterising these relationships. It is not a choice between intra-categorical or inter-categorical (McCall 2005). Nor is it a choice between unitary or multiple or intersectional (Hancock 2007). Rather, the extent of the separation or integration of the strands (and projects) is empirically variable. These are best thought of as variations in the extent to which strands (and projects) mutually shape each other, rather than as mutually constitute each other. These forms of competition and cooperation produce different types of relations between multiple inequalities.

Mutual constitution or mutual shaping?

The relations between intersecting entities are conceptualised by Crenshaw and Hancock as 'mutual constitution'. This means that the original entities that intersect are transformed into something new, which is not the same as either of the originating forms. For example, a 'black women' cannot be understood as the mere addition of women and black, but is rather a distinctive category.

In the typology proposed by Hancock, only 'mutual constitution' counts as 'intersectional'. This is contrasted with the notion that inequalities are simply added together at the point of intersection, 'multiple', and with the notion that there is one over-arching inequality, 'unitary'. McCall, by contrast, considers both 'intra-categorical' and 'inter-categorical' to be types of intersectionality; mutual constitution is not necessary for the relation between multiple inequalities to be counted as 'intersectional'.

The concept of mutual constitution is too simple and insufficiently ambitious to grasp the varying and uneven contribution of each strand to the outcome. There is a need to specify the particularity that each strand brings to each instance, without resorting to the notion of infinite variety suggested by the anticategorical approach that precludes systematic and explanatory analysis. A better concept is that of 'mutual shaping', since this more readily enables the retention of naming of each strand while simultaneously recognising that it is affected by the engagement with the others.

Visibility

There is a tension over whether naming specific inequality strands is always the best approach in the analysis of intersectionality. Crenshaw is critical of the invisibility of the issue of domestic violence against Black women and shows that this is bound up with the disadvantaged position of intersectional group of Black women. Naming might be thought of as most associated with the analysis of strands as separable 'multiple parallel', while invisibilising (e.g. de-gendering) might be thought to be associated with the analytic approach of 'mutual constitution'. However, writers that prioritise the 'mutual constitution' approach to intersectionality nevertheless often argue for separate naming, which might appear somewhat inconsistent.

There are some conceptual ambiguities in this area. While it might appear that naming or not-naming is a simple dichotomy, in practice, many concepts are in between, with inequalities implicitly named rather than erased or named explicitly. For example, in relation to gender, the concepts of 'carer' and 'domestic violence' are implicitly gendered, in that most speakers would understand the asymmetric gender relations implied by these terms. In

relation to the gender/ethnic intersection, the concept of 'forced marriage' is implicitly both gendered and ethnic, but not explicitly so. In the context of gender mainstreaming, where the goal is the inclusion of the gender equality project into the mainstream and the aspiration is to change the mainstream, it is as likely that the gender equality project will itself be modified (Jahan 1995; Moser 2005; Rees 2005; Walby 2005;). Success may involve the submerging of the named project (gender equality) within a larger project (human rights, social democracy) in alliance with other projects, which, while including feminist goals, is not named as gendered. Whether de-gendering is part of a successful integration of a gender equality project into a larger project or part of its defeat depends upon the resources available to the gender constituency, the resources to allies and opponents, and the context.

2.6 Conclusions

Going beyond the three-fold typologies of McCall and Hancock, a five-fold typology of the different types of relations between multiple intersecting inequalities is proposed. It is necessary to distinguish the different areas and dimensions along which the intersection of multiple inequalities may differ. There are five main dimensions or areas. First, greater or lesser significance of internal divisions and inequalities in the intersecting strands, categories or entities. It is important that these divisions and inequalities recognised otherwise the powerful fade from view, the manner depending on context. Second, the stability or fluidity of categories. Social categories need to be temporarily stabilised for analysis, while recognising that their social construction is the outcome of changes and interactions over time. The extent to which any specific analysis focuses on processes of change or on a single moment in time depends on the question at hand. Third, which strands or entities are relevant. Variations in the ontology should not preclude the inclusion of multiple strands or entities, including class. Fourth, equality or asymmetry of strands. The normative pressure to declare all inequalities of equal importance should be resisted since this is not the case in the empirical world. Rather strands and entities are of varying significance in the structuring of social relations. Fifth, mutual constitution or mutual shaping. While some small social groups are uniquely defined by processes of mutual constitution at points of intersection, for most analysis it is preferable to utilise the notion of the mutual shaping of sets of social relations, which recognises their continued distinctive existence as well.

The concept of intersectionality has been important in inserting additional questions into the analysis of social relations, and is not confined to the field of gender equality. However, re-emerging orthodoxies contain mistaken theorisations that require critical engagement and revision. This critique and redevelopment of the concept of intersectionality engages with the nature of the entities that are intersecting, the significance of the intersection of class with gender, and the varied types of asymmetric relations between intersecting sets of social relations.

In order to address power, intersecting inequalities are better understood as sets of social relations each with ontological depth, rather than as 'strands' or 'categories'. This is important in order to make visible the actions of the powerful within each set of social relations, who are otherwise obscured from view by the concept of 'strand' or category, which has often tended towards a focus on the actions of the subordinate group (women rather than men, blacks rather than whites, minority rather than majority groups). There is a need to

go beyond the tendency to analyse the issue of intersectionality as one of the problems of minority groups. It is important to go beyond the focus on small groups at specific points at intersection, since such a conception tends to limit the analysis to the descriptive and the static at the expense of process and change; instead an understanding of these as systems of social relations engages the dynamic and historical constitution of these structured social relations. Because of this distinctive ontology, multiple inequalities need to be separately addressed, in addition to their points of intersection. In addition, the relationship between entities is not always best represented as between groups, but may sometimes be better described as between projects.

While class was central to earlier accounts of gender relations it has tended to fall out of focus as ethnicity has become foregrounded, especially in texts originating in the USA. The emergence of gender, ethnicity, disability, age, religion and sexual orientation in the European Union as justiciable grounds has combined with the institutionalisation of social movements on each of these strands to produced potent new fields of policy and politics. This has led to class being either neglected or addressed in a separate field. Class should be systematically reinserted in analyses of gender relations since it has long had a key role in structuring the field of equality policies and politics. While there is a normative position in much intersectionality work that the significance of each of the strands is same, this is not sustainable in analysis of the world.

The relationship between strands should not be theorised as if it is uniform in all places. The choice is not between additive and mutually constituted. There is a wider range in practice that should thus be reflected in theory. The relations between the strands may be competitive or cooperative, hierarchical or equal, asymmetrical or hegemonic. There may be contributions to projects that are separate, competing or shared. There will be occasions where some strands of inequality remain relatively separate and parallel, as well as those where intersections mores significantly shape the relations between them.

3. Good practices in addressing multiple inequalities in gender equality policies?

Mieke Verloo and Sylvia Walby

The conceptual framework presented in the previous chapter outlines a number of dilemmas that have to be addressed in order to incorporate attention to multiple inequalities in gender equality policies. These issues include: the relationship between inequalities; identification of relevant inequalities including class; making gender visible or degendering; making power visible; distinguishing between small groups, strands, projects and policy field; alliances, coalitions and hegemony; the meaning and positioning of gender equality in policy priorities; the tension between mainstreaming and anti-discrimination strategies and the breadth of remit.

The 'good practices' of gender equality policy engagement with multiple intersecting inequalities presented in this chapter draws from the empirical work of researchers in all our countries (all EU Member States and two candidate countries). The basis of this chapter is work done by the QUING researchers who did the country studies in which they described

examples and the extent to which they could identify 'good practice' in addressing multiple inequalities and their intersection, in the gender equality policies of the countries they had analyzed. These representations of good practices were discussed at the QUING workshop in Vienna (November 2008), leading to a few revisions.

What was seen as crucial for a gender equality policy to be identified as having good practice on intersectionality?

In summary, good practices on intersectionality in gender equality policies can only be 'good' if they are embedded in *good* gender equality policy, that is:

- If they are transformative, recognizing the structural character of gender inequality across many domains in their proposed actions and measures.
- If they are rooted and shaped in constructive dialogue with civil society organizations working towards the abolishment of gender inequality.

Attention to the structural character of gender inequality and inclusive processes is needed to do justice to the distinctive ontology of gender inequality and to counterbalance processes of dilution that can occur during the development and implementation of gender equality policies. They are key to keeping gender equality policies focused and effective, radical and inclusive.

In more detail, several interlinked elements are seen to be present in these good practices.

- *Attention to the structural dimension of all relevant inequalities* is needed, for the same reason as attention to the structural dimension of gender inequality is needed. Attention to the structural dimension assures that the specific ontology of each inequality can be accounted for.
- *A focus on privilege and power, not only on barriers and disadvantages* is a more concrete criterion that shows that the structural dimension of any inequality is in focus. When the attention is mainly on barriers or on disadvantages, the analysis stays mainly on the individual level, which can lead to policies that tinker with the capacity of individual people to overcome barriers or disadvantages while the barriers or disadvantages themselves are not eliminated. It can also easily lead to policies that focus on a few small groups at one intersection between two inequalities. It is crucial that policies intervene in the social and political construction of privilege, not only the social and political construction of disadvantage.
- *Covering not only several inequalities*, is a criterion that builds upon the previous ones to expand on the way inequalities are interfering with each other. Which inequalities matter and how they are interrelated has to be seen as a matter that is to be investigated and analyzed for each policy context. For this, the main inequalities that are listed in European Union policies are important but not the only ones. In particular, class is an important intersecting axis of inequality that is often neglected in European Union-led equality policies, either because it is seen as belonging to other policy domains or seen as not relevant.
- *Having awareness of intersecting inequalities* is closely connected to this. As inequalities are never fully separate, but always to some extent interwoven and

interrelated, the nature of the relations between inequalities needs to be identified and addressed.

- *Explicitness* can be important, since naming each inequality and naming the nature of their relations with each other can make policy-making processes more transparent and open to constructive criticism. The separate naming of gender can be advantageous to gender equality projects. However, this is not to underestimate the significance of building joint projects, which in some circumstances do not always name each strand.
- *Involvement of civil society, especially movements for equality* can counterbalance tendencies of dilution in similar ways as for good gender equality policies.
- *Inclusiveness and visibility*, the combination of the two previous criteria, can help in creating access for citizens to understand and contribute to the development of policies .
- *Impact on practice, not only on rhetoric* means that good practices are characterized by the ability of policies to deliver. The presence of a budget or concrete policy actions that clearly outline responsibilities and means of action are important.

Based on these criteria, we can now answer the question: Are there 'good practices' of gender equality policy engagement with multiple intersecting inequalities at this moment in Europe?

The most direct answer is that there are not many 'good practices'. In fact, attention to intersecting inequalities and gender in policy documents on gender equality is still rare. Only a few examples of good practice were identified by the QUING researchers. This means that there are still more questions than answers. There is also ongoing concern about 'bad' practices such as stigmatisation, lack of attention for the specific situation or discrimination of intersectional groups, or the fading away of gender when the attention turns from gender equality to broader defined goals such as diversity.

In general, only a few countries did not comply with the European Union Directives (Poland is an example in case as it has no anti-discrimination law), and often these Directives have led to newly created possibilities to address discrimination based on race/ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, disability or multiple discrimination. Intersectionality however, is not a common policy concept. Intersectionality is sometimes recognized as a specific form of how inequalities are related to each other. Some examples can be found in Hungary, Poland and Spain. In Hungary, a complex understanding of intersectionality in which all grounds may intersect with all other grounds, and all of these intersections are seen to shape what inequality means, only occurs once in the documents analyzed, in a policy document of relatively low impact and written upon close international impact: the National Strategy and Priorities for the European Year of Equal Opportunities. In Spain, the Basque IV Positive Action Plan for Equality between men and women 2006 pays a great deal of attention to the diversity of women, and to the situations of multiple discriminations. There is a real concern for intersecting inequalities in this document, but it is not labeled intersectionality and lacks a more consistent theorization (about the forms of intersections). In Poland, the 2005 National Action Plan for Women, sees intersectionality as one of the aspects of gender equality, and

states that race, ethnicity, religion, disability, age and sexual orientation should not be obstacles in reaching equality between women and men.

Some patterns are visible in the type of texts that are seen to contain 'good practices'. Firstly, some of the 'good practices' that were identified are connected to the European Year of Equal Opportunities. Next to the example of Hungary that was described above, other examples here are Czech Republic and Italy. In Czech Republic, the National Strategy for the European Year of Equal opportunities led to a number of activities that include attention for intersecting inequalities, naming especially "the combination of multiple discriminatory bases in respect of women from the most disadvantaged groups", such as Roma women (p.8). Although the main focus is on awareness-raising, and class is not included in its list of inequalities, this report is one of the few examples found in Czech Republic that pay attention to gender in connection with other inequalities. In Italy, even if the National Plan for the European Year of Equal Opportunities is lacking in attribution of institutional and legislative responsibilities, and lists only very general measures, it is also inclusive (contains attention for a large number of inequalities), explicit, tries to articulate what 'multiple inequalities' are in a way that other Italian governmental policy texts do not, and it is based on civil society consultation.

A second pattern is that there are quite a few 'good practices' texts that originate in civil society. Some of the 'good practices' were found in Shadow reports to CEDAW or in governmental dialogue with CEDAW. This is the case for Germany, Latvia, the Netherlands and Slovakia. In Germany, there has been a dialogue between the government and civil society about the National Action Plan to Combat Violence against Women (NAPCVW 1999) pays attention to subgroups along various inequalities that intersect with gender. The Shadow Report to CEDAW 2003 criticizes the Plan however for its lack of specific support for these subgroups, its lack of attention for class, its lack of measures to prevent cultural relativism, and its degendering of domestic violence. The Dutch CEDAW shadow report (2006), written by a large coalition of Dutch NGO's) also criticizes the government for paying attention to minority women in a wrong kind of way, namely by denying structural power differences and pretending that all citizens (and all women) have equal voices. Moreover, the government tends to reinforce stereotyping instead of acting against the discrimination and the stereotyping that migrant (particularly Muslim) women are confronted with in the Netherlands. In Latvia, the Shadow Report to The Combined Initial, Second, and Third Periodic Report of Latvia 2004, clearly delineates several intersections, such as gender and ethnicity, disability, regionality and class, even if it is only in its diagnostic part. In Slovakia, while attention for intersecting inequalities is largely absent in policy making, the CEDAW Shadow report combines a separate section dealing with a situation of a specific group at the intersection of gender and ethnicity (Roma women) covering several gender equality issues with a mainstreaming approach in which the possible different experiences of intersecting groups is taking into consideration in gender equality policies. While the first approach allows for a deeper analysis of qualitatively different experiences that groups at the intersection of gender and other inequalities have, even if it could have more targeted measures, the second approach mainstreams intersectionality as directly imbedded into gender equality. More generally, quite many 'good practices' were identified in NGO texts (Hungary; Ireland; Latvia; Germany; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Slovenia; Slovakia; United Kingdom).

In some countries, the researchers could only find 'good practices' at sub-national level, as in the example from the Basque Country mentioned earlier. In Belgium too, a 'good practice' was only identified in Flanders. The *Flemish Policy Plan Equal Opportunities* is peppered with intersectionalist theory and practice. Gender and the other inequalities are not seen as separated or fragmented but as mutually constitutive to each other. In France, there is very few intersectional attention in a policy environment in which all discriminations are treated as isolated the ones from the others, even at the civil society level. At local level, there are some 'good practices', the one that was identified is a project that elaborates propositions for the government and the EU to facilitate the professional insertion of vulnerable (low educated or migrant) women victim of violence.

Other patterns that emerge in the description of 'good practices' are that there seem to be more examples found that are on the issue of gender based violence than on other issues. Also, it seems that a lack of structural understanding of gender and a lack of structural understanding of other inequalities coincide. The phenomenon that gender fades away when the concept of diversity of pluralism of differences between people is used has also been described. Typically, some other inequalities than gender are found in connection to specific issues (class and non-employment; sexual orientation and intimate citizenship). There are also differences in the political salience of different inequalities' that intersect with gender. While age and disability are never described as being controversial, sexual orientation and ethnicity sometimes are. For sexual orientation this is mainly described for new Member States. The politically contested ethnicities are connected to migration, Islam and Roma minorities.

So far, some patterns have been outlined that were visible in the representation of 'good practices' by QUING researchers. The most important are: rare articulation of complex analyses of intersecting inequalities, a visible influence of the European Union and of CEDAW processes, a positive contribution of civil society.

For Denmark, no 'good practice' has been identified, because the governmental policy is analyzed to be stigmatizing. While race/ethnicity is on the agenda in Denmark both within gender equality policies as well as within policies on non-employment and violence, it has entered the agenda in Denmark within a discursive shift from tolerance towards hostility. When ethnicity/race is articulated in gender equality policies "the Other" is constructed as the problem of gender equality. For example immigrant women and men are blamed for not living up to the Danish gender equality standards. This means that many of the policies are in themselves discriminatory.

Importantly, the identified 'good practices' are often just a first step towards good gender+ equality policies. Often the examples are mere projects and hence are not potentially strong on long lasting impact. The attention to multiple inequalities typically is found rather in the diagnosis, not in the policies proposed. Luxembourg for instance, mainly presents 'intersectional' statistics. While this is a good first step, in itself it is clearly not enough to result in policy action of any kind. Furthermore, the practices identified predominantly concern attention for intersectional groups as especially vulnerable categories. While this attention is highly needed, the risk of stigmatisation is not always addressed, as the example from the German government-Shadow report dialogue shows. When there is growing awareness of the tension between specific attention or services for some intersectional

groups and their problems and the risk of stigmatization, there is, however, hope for the future, as is the case in the examples described for Finland, UK, Ireland, Netherlands, Spain and Turkey.

Other hopeful elements are that class is not always forgotten, and most of all that there are examples of consultation with civil society organizations representing gender as well as organizations representing other inequalities, even if these mostly are not intersectional organizations. At the level of the institutional arrangements, there is also occasional attention for the phenomenon of the fading away of gender, by explicitly arranging that the body responsible for gender deals with 'multiple discrimination' cases (Austria).

4. Summarizing preliminary recommendations **Mieke Verloo and Sylvia Walby**

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