MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY IN EUROPE. A FRAME ANALYSIS APPROACH
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Introduction[1]

Since Beijing 1995, gender mainstreaming has heralded the beginning of a renewed effort to address what is seen as one of the roots of gender inequality: the genderedness of systems, procedures and organizations. In the definition of the Council of Europe, gender mainstreaming is the (re)organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages, by the actors normally involved in policy-making. All member states and some candidate states of the European Union have started to imple-ment gender mainstreaming. The 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam places equality between women and men among the explicit tasks of the European Union and obliges the EU to promote gender equality in all its tasks and activities. The Gender Mainstreaming approach that has been legitimated by this Treaty is backed by legislation and by positive action in favour of women (or the "under-represented sex"). Gender equality policies have not only been part and parcel of modernising action in the Euro-pean Union, but can be expected to continue to be so (Rossili 2000). With regard to gender inequality, the EU has both a formal EU problem definition at the present time, and a formalised set of EU strate-gies.

Problems in the implementation of gender equality policies abound, at both national and EU level. To give just one example, it took the Netherlands – usually very supportive of the EU –14 years to implement article 119 on Equal Pay (Van der Vleuten 2001). Moreover, it has been documented that overall EU action has run counter to its goal of gender equality. Overall EU action has weakened women's social rights more seriously than men's (Rossili 2000). The introduction of Gender Main-streaming, the incorporation of gender and women's concerns in all regular policymaking is meant to address precisely this problem of a contradiction between specific gender policies and regular EU policies. Yet, in the case of the Structural Funds, for instance, Gender Mainstreaming has been used to further reduce existing funds and incentives for gender equality (Rossili 2000).

Against this backdrop, this paper will present an approach at studying divergences in policy frames around gender equality as one of the elements connected to implementation problems: the MAGEEQ project.

Gender mainstreaming and the politics of implementation

The world-wide adoption of the Gender Mainstreaming strategy can be traced back to the UN-conference in Beijing, and is connected to earlier international agreements, such as CEDAW. Since Beijing, the EU has been among the major pioneers in developing Gender Mainstreaming, both by

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starting a process of Gender Mainstreaming within the European Commission itself, by diffusing information to Member States and candidate states in a number of conferences and seminars (in Brussels, Bled, London), and through the reorganisation of EU-policies so that Member States can hardly escape engaging in Gender Mainstreaming (as in the case of the regulations for the Structural Funds). After Beijing, several national governments have announced that Gender Mainstreaming will be adopted as part of their continuous efforts to achieve gender equality. Countries such as Sweden and the Netherlands took the lead in developing specific tools. At yet another level, supranational organisations such as the Nordic Council of Ministers, the Council of Europe, the World Bank and the ILO started initiatives directed at their respective constituencies.

Gender Mainstreaming is a typical example of a strategy that involves multiple levels in governance, but also multiple shifts in governance. Multiple levels because it involves not only national or regional state bureaucracies, but also institutions in fields like science and economy. Multiple shifts in governance, because the strategy aims at a reorganisation of policy processes, and at a shift in responsibilities. The strategy of Gender Mainstreaming aims at a multiplication of the actors, policy areas and policy levels that are involved in working towards gender equality (Council of Europe 1998). The obvious question then is how multi-level governance affects the development and implementation of such a comprehensive and ambitious strategy. The paragraphs below point to a major factor that affects the introduction and implementation of policies (Braithwaite 2000; Tarrow 1998; Beveridge, Nott & Stephen 2000; Behning & Serrano Pascual 2001; Rubery & Fagan 2000; Hafner-Burton & Pollack 2000; Verloo 1999a & 2001). This factor is a discursive one: policy frames and strategical framing.

Gender mainstreaming and framing
Gender Mainstreaming is a recent strategy, and the few studies that exist at the moment stress that it is too early for evaluation. There are only a limited number of more reflective studies, and very little academic research. This section will review the most promising ones, showing that it is striking that their conclusions seem to point in similar directions.
There is a major accent in practice on Gender Mainstreaming in connection to employment or labour market issues. Behning & Serrano Pascual (2001) concentrate on the impact of the concept of Gender Mainstreaming in national practices on employment, covering twelve Western European countries. They find differences in Gender Mainstreaming parallel to divergent national paths pursued towards the goal of gender equality. As shown by the national reports in their book, the understanding and adaptation of the Gender Mainstreaming concept varies widely in the Member States of the EU, ranging from the equation of the concept with equal opportunities and equality to its being understood as affirmative action, equal treatment, equal participation, reform of government. As a result, they state that there is not a general understanding of the concept in the various Member States, and they conclude – even more importantly – that most policies implemented in Member States are just a continuation of previous policies. The main problem is a focus on women as the subject of change, and a focus on fitting women into the status quo rather than transforming the status quo. In Spain for instance, Gender Mainstreaming in practice is just the reinforcing of positive discrimination policies.

Behning and Serrano Pascual stress the importance of a clear understanding of Gender Mainstreaming because an adequate implementation requires a gender perspective in all decision-making processes. As they analyse Gender Mainstreaming in the EU as a top-down strategy – which implies an attempt at harmonisation of European gender cultures – they regret the failure of institutional actors to include actors from the women's movements in the development of the strategy. They plea for a

stronger participation of citizens and women's movements in order not to loose a great deal of knowledge and implementation opportunities. Moreover, they conclude that it is particularly important to clarify the meaning of Gender Mainstreaming. What the work of Behning and Serrano Pascual shows, is that discussions on gender mainstreaming as a strategy need to involve discussions about its goal. What is conceptualised as a "gender equality perspective" in the definition needs an elaboration in each and every gender mainstreaming initiative. In the differentiated European countries there are several "gender equality frames", different and sometimes competing ideas about what the problem is, about who is responsible for the problem, about what are the causes and effects, and about what would be a solution. Or, to put it in the words of a young Swedish feminist: gender mainstreaming cannot replace politics (Bjork 2002).

Another review work focuses on specific Gender Mainstreaming tools. The EU's expert group on Gender and Employment EGGE published a report on Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) and the European Employment strategy (Rubery & Fagan 2000). GIA is one of the most developed instruments for Gender Mainstreaming (Verloo & Roggeband 1996). A GIA identifies positive or negative outcomes of proposed policies in terms of gender equality. GIA's are meant to inform decision-making in an early stage so as to be able to reorient or mitigate policies if necessary. As an instrument, GIA is developing at uneven rates across Member States, the group concludes, with Sweden and the Netherlands taking the lead.

The report stresses that even as more practical elaborations of the GIA methodology are necessary, what is most urgent is a further conceptual elaboration. What the report calls an "upwards" elaboration, means that GIA guidelines need to be located in a broader and more explicit theoretical statement of how gender inequality is reproduced in society. The "downwards", more practical elaboration then follows from this conceptual framing of gender relations and gender inequality. According to the report, a more developed conceptual framework can inform GIA, and lead to improved GIA methodology, to avoid GIA's that merely make gender visible, but fail to be gender sensitive. This is all the more important because they find there is a lack of expertise in policy evaluation in general, and of methods for Gender Mainstreaming evaluation specifically.

Another major issue that is brought to the fore by the report is how to combine GIA with attention for other forms of structural inequality. They point out that this question will gain increasing prominence because the new European Social Policy Agenda sets out a number of proposed actions on discrimination on other grounds than gender. This calls for a sound understanding of dimensions of gender inequality as related to other structural inequalities, such as ethnicity, age, class, sexual orientation and physical ability. Jill Rubery and Colette Fagan point once more towards more attention for the goal of gender mainstreaming. They call for more theory on what is the problem of gender equality; they call for attention for the links between gender inequality and other structural inequalities.

Continuing the overview, similar conclusions are found in the TSER project on "Predicting the Impact on Policy" co-ordinated by Sue Nott, Fiona Beveridge and Kylie Stephen (2000). According to these researchers, diversity in concepts of equality is inevitable, and has positive as well as negative consequences. Because of this diversity, strategies also need to be democratic. In a pluralist understanding this can be seen as a facet of subsidiarity, which in turn is an element of democracy.

The first academic studies centre on explaining conditions for a successful start of Gender Mainstreaming (Mazey 2000; Hafner-Burton & Pollack 2000). Mazey shows how Gender Mainstreaming constitutes a clear example of policy succession or policy adaptation, prompted by the desire to overcome the limitations of existing policies, and the need to respond to a changed policy environment. In Hafner-Burton's and Pollack's analysis of Gender Mainstreaming in the European Union, it is pointed out that the EU until recently has pursued its ambitious agenda on gender equality mainly along the comparatively narrow neo-liberal front of workplace legislation, but that it has begun to pursue a broader agenda in the 90s, with potentially important consequences for European women and

for the EU as a progressive polity. Their work concentrates on this expansion of the EU agenda, and on explaining cross sectional variation within the EU in the start and implementation of Gender Mainstreaming. They consider five areas: Structural funds, Employment and Social Affairs, Development, Competition, and Science, Research and Development.

Even if Hafner-Burton and Pollack offer a rather sweeping analysis of the policy frames involved, and framing processes related to them, their analysis shows the dominance of framing as an important aspect of explaining the occurrence and successful starting of the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming. They use the concept of strategical framing as a dynamic concept that enables to see how different actors adapt existing policy frames to pursue their respective goals. (Strategical framing is defined as attempting to construct a fit between existing frames and the frames of the change agent.) Their case studies support two general conclusions: the variability of results, and secondly, the ability of strategic actors to overcome structural obstacles through a skilful process of strategical framing.

In their final conclusions, they warn the EU that their Gender Mainstreaming efforts might turn into an integrationist approach – integrating women and gender issues into specific policies rather than rethinking the fundamental aims of the EU from a gender perspective. They see this as the inevitable result of the strategical framing processes who "sell" Gender Mainstreaming as an effective means to the ends pursued by the policy makers, rather than as an overt challenge to those ends. Especially since the EU is one of the most successful implementers so far, this threatens the transformative potential of Gender Mainstreaming.

The study of Braithwaite (1999) concerns Gender Mainstreaming in the Structural Funds exclusively. Her study on what can be seen as the most developed area within the EU so far, comes to similar conclusions as the research discussed earlier. It states that many important areas of Structural Funds intervention in terms of gender equality are missed, and that the relevance of gender is sometimes highly contested. It stresses that one of the general risks of the Gender Mainstreaming approach is linked to the absence of precise objectives on reduced gender inequalities. As a result, the treatment of gender can be easily located within, and then be subject to, other policy goals, such as employment creation, economic growth or poverty reduction. So far, she says, the main objective in terms of the Structural Funds and gender equality is to improve female participation in the labour market. Reconciliation of home and professional life is then treated as a means to facilitate women's more active participation in the labour market, rather than as an equality objective in its own right. Contrary to the rhetoric of Gender Mainstreaming, efficiency and effectiveness are, in the practices analysed by Braithwaite, more convincing arguments for integrating equality concerns into Structural Funds programmes than "equity".

Gender mainstreaming and strategical framing
The studies and experiences presented call for more research and consideration of the goal of gender mainstreaming. The problem is that there is a tendency to downplay the goal, to act "as if we all know" what the goal is, to act "as if we all agree" what the goal is. The studies actually prove that there is no such consensus, that the goal can be gender equality, or equal opportunities, or attention for diversity, or more women in higher positions, and so on.. Concerning implementation they show that disparities and distortions are linked to shifts and differences in gender equality concepts.

Success too seems to be connected to the representation of the goal, through processes of strategical framing, as much as to good political opportunities and mobilizing[2]. In gender mainstreaming strategical framing refers to a process of linking a feminist goal (such as gender equality) to some

major goal of an organization that should engage, or is engaging in gender mainstreaming, thereby securing the allegiance of these organizations to gender mainstreaming. To give an example: there is strategical framing in presenting gender mainstreaming as an approach that is capable of advancing gender equality while *at the same time* increasing organizational effectiveness (Meyerson & Kolb 2000). Similarly, it is not uncommon to present gender mainstreaming as an approach that can jointly achieve gender equality and excellence in science (ETAN report 2000), or gender equality and more democracy (Council of Europe 1998), or to say that more gender equality will also mean more economic growth (known as "the business case for gender equality").

MAGEEQ: analyzing frames on gender equality in Europe
Building upon this, MAGEEQ starts from the assumption that, under conditions of multi-level governance, the diversity in interpretations of "gender inequality as a policy problem" becomes more salient, as multiple frames find places to manifest themselves and multiple political opportunities and networks become relevant. MAGEEQ's ambition to grasp this diversity in gender equality frames is linked to the role of this diversity in both distortions and success in gender mainstreaming.

MAGEEQ is a three-year multi-disciplinary research project (2003-2005) funded within the European Commission's 5th Framework Programme. Its first part is a comparative study on the framing of gender inequality as a policy problem in Austria, Greece, Hungary, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, and at the level of the European Union. MAGEEQ analyses differences in dynamic configurations of gender inequality frames that can explain differences in the implementation of Gender Mainstreaming in Europe, and aims at constructing a conceptual framework on gender equality, which will assist further steps in the project in constructing tools for the monitoring of inconsistencies in policies and policy frames, and in organising debates on gender equality policies.

MAGEEQ questions the presentation of gender equality as a common similar goal and gender mainstreaming as a common similar strategy across Europe, and studies the actual variety of understandings of this goal and strategy at the national level. MAGEEQ intends to deconstruct the multitude of meanings of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in practice, and tries to construct/ propose concepts that enable distinctions between divergent meanings that are now covered under these general terms. In doing so, MAGEEQ uses frame analysis as a method, and builds upon theoretical notions chosen from policy theory, social movement theory and gender theory.

In other papers at this conference Birgit Sauer, Andrea Kriszan and Viola Zentai will present some preliminary findings from the research project, focusing on shifts, inconsistencies and distortions in policy frames on gender equality within and between countries of the European Union.

Studying differences in gender equality policy frames
As a political problem, the gender problematic has been described as a "messy" one: there is no consensus as to what the problem is, where it is located, who is responsible for it, or what could be a solution to the problem. Should the goal be Equality? Or Difference? Or should it be Autonomy? Or should the goal be framed from the perspective of the ethics of care? In politics, in civil society and among academic experts, many competing visions and analyses on gender equality can be found, even if they have been described mainly for the West (Lorber 1994, Castells 1997). There have been ideological cleavages within Europe along the North-South axis (for instance in the parity debate), and there is another one that is becoming more and more visible along the East-West divide. The Enlargement confronts the EU with a new set of countries where gender inequality problems are framed in yet another way (Jalusic 2001, Havelkova 1998). Even among those who have viewed em-

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[2] Strategical framing refers to processes of frame alignment, a concept developed within social movement theory. Strategical framing refers to strategical efforts to link frames of social movements to those of prospective con-

ployment as the principal path towards gender equality different strategies have prevailed, seen as influenced by differences in national political context (Orloff 2001). Differences in framing gender inequality (or feminist ideology) are obviously connected to political and cultural contexts, and to political and cultural histories and ideologies.

In theory and practice, there are ongoing fundamental debates on what constitutes feminism, on developing normative feminist concepts, on identifying ideological and strategical traps, and on constructing new strategies. These debates have existed all along the history of feminism, as feminism is a cluster of contesting views on the gender problematic (Arneil 1999). Academic studies have been focusing on discursive analyses of various feminisms, but so far these analyses have not been linked to policy making. (Kemp & Squires 1999, Lorber 1994; Klinger 2001; Castells 1997). At this moment, there is no common framework to provide for a productive exchange in these debates, which could lead to a further improvement, development and evaluation of gender equality policies. Such a framework would also be needed for evaluating the design and implementation of policies, an until now often-overlooked yet fundamental part of the evaluation of gender equality policies (Bustelo 2001a and b).

Consequently, the first aim of the comparative analysis within MAGEEQ is to construct an empirically grounded analytical framework of the various dimensions of gender inequality policy frames. MAGEEQ concentrates on differences in policy frames and policy framing and uses frame analysis as a methodology. Unlike other approaches, frame analysis starts from the assumption of multiple interpretations in policymaking, and addresses problems of dominance and exclusion connected to policymaking. Implementation of policies is seen as a political process, subject to all mechanisms of political processes. Under conditions of multi-level governance, implementation is a complex process of transfer and translation: unitary concepts or frames, as presented in political decisions and policies at (sub) national and supranational levels contrast with a dynamic reality of multiple frames at national levels. This contrast between an assumed stable unity and a real dynamic diversity is seen as a 'black box' of distortions in the implementation of policies. The shifts that occur during implementation often coincide with exclusion processes. As the role of policy framing in inconsistencies and exclusion processes has been underexposed so far in academic research more innovative knowledge on the role of policy frames in implementation seems to be needed (Triandafyllidou & Fotiou 1998).

The framework that MAGEEQ aims at developing should enable the following research questions to be answered: What is similar, what is different, & what are (shifting) patterns in similarities & differences? How differentiated are patterns in Western and Eastern Member States? How are patterns at national level connected to existing and developing EU frames (e.g. the Charter of Fundamental Rights)? Which processes of exclusion result from dominant frames? Who and what is excluded? What inconsistencies can be detected, and what are the consequences?

Policy frames and frame analysis
There are many terms used to refer to interpretative constructs of reality: frame, schema, script, scenario are but a few of the examples given (Goffmann 1974; Kelley 1972). These concepts refer to signification as a dimension of social practices that is closely clinked to the dimension of legitimation and domination (Giddens 1984). A frame is an interpretation scheme that structures the meaning of reality. As a general definition of the concept is missing (Van Gorp 2001), our concept of a policy frame builds on authors such as Entman (1993) and Tuchman (1978) to result in the following definition: a policy frame is *an organising principle that transforms fragmentary or incidental information into a structured and meaningful policy problem, in which a solution is implicitly or explicitly enclosed*.

stituents or adversaries (see Snow & Benford 2000 for an overview).

Hence policy frames are not descriptions of reality, but specific constructions that give meaning to reality, and shape the understanding of reality. Research working with these or similar concepts is based on a constructionist approach to reality, where discourse, through its close connection to the construction of truths is seen as having important material and immaterial impacts. In implementation processes policy frames are the medium, transferred and necessarily adapted from one level to another, from one area to another. Frame analysis is concerned *with the (re)construction and negotiation of reality by social/ political actors through the use of symbolic tools* (Triandafyllidou & Fotiou 1998). Framing then can be seen as *the process of constructing, adapting and negotiating frames.* The MAGEEQ research project intends to contribute to the further development of frame analysis by studying framing in connection to legitimacy and domination, and by contributing to its further methodological development.

The debates on parity democracy in the period before the Amsterdam Treaty are a good example to highlight the importance of policy frames, because they showed how a seemingly simple policy goal – to strengthen gender equality in political decision-making – could be framed in radically opposing ways (Rossili 2000). Was it a question of women being a disadvantaged group? Are women to be seen as an interest group? Is citizenship gendered and should sexual identity be introduced into the definition of the legal person (Lovenduski 2000, Vogel-Polski 2000)? More examples could be given, such as the differences that occur in the debates around flexibility in the European labour market, where the opposing frames are on favouring part-time work as a type of work more suitable for women, as opposed to a general reduction of working time for everyone. When it comes to issues such as prostitution and domestic violence, national differences in policy frames are so high that they seem almost unbridgeable. The Dutch policy frame on prostitution is to treat it more or less as a regular type of paid labour, whereas the Swedish frame treats it as a crime (Outshoorn 2001). Most EU countries provide shelter for battered women, whereas Austria expels the (usually male) perpetrator from the home (Logar 2000).

Framing gender inequality as a policy problem – from legal equality to positive action to Gender Mainstreaming

Other approaches or strategies in gender equality policies that are frequently distinguished are equal treatment in legislation, and specific or targeted equality policies (Rees 1998; Nelen & Hondeghem 2000). Equal treatment in legislation is focused on providing equal access, and correcting existing inequalities in legislation, so that individual citizens are formally equal. This strategy is often framed within a liberal discourse, holding individual citizens responsible for using their formal equal rights. The starting point for the strategy of specific or targeted gender equality policies is the recognition that all citizens cannot always use equal rights to the same extent, because of persistent gender inequalities that exist at the level of society. This strategy aims at creating conditions that will result in equality in outcome, to counterbalance the unequal starting positions of men and women in most societies. Mostly, specific measures aim at mitigating unequal conditions and facilitate equality for (specific groups of) women. These measures are usually taken by specialised state institutions, mainly by gender equality agencies. Positive action and positive discrimination, in the sense of preferential treatment for women, can be part of this last approach. Gender Mainstreaming addresses the problem of gender inequality at a more structural level, identifying gender biases in current policies, and assessing the impact of these gender biases in the reproduction of gender inequality. By reorganising policy processes so that the regular policy makers will be obliged and capable to incorporate a perspective of gender equality in their policies, this strategy aims at a fundamental transformation, eliminating gender biases, and redirecting policies so that they can contribute towards the goal of gender equality. The difference between the three strategies depicted above are related to major differences in policy

frames, that are described in Table 1 as differences in diagnosis, in the attribution of causality, in prognosis and in the resulting call for action[3].

Table 1: Different approaches in gender equality policies

STRATEGY	DIAGNOSIS	ATTRIBUTION OF CAUSALITY	PROGNOSIS	CALL FOR ACTION
	What is wrong?	Who/what is responsible for the problem?	What should be done?	Who should do something?
Equal treatment	Inequality in law, different laws/ rights for men and women	Individual responsibilities	Change the laws towards formally equal rights for men and women in laws	Legislators
Specific equality policies	Unequal starting position of men and women. Group disadvantage of women. Specific problems of women that are not addressed. Lack of access, skills, or resources of women	Diverse, both at individual level, and at structural level	Design & fund specific projects to address problems of (specific groups of) women	Gender equality agencies, sometimes together with established institutions
Gender Mainstreaming	Gender bias in regular policies and social institutions resulting in gender inequality	Policy makers (unintentionally)	(Re) organise policy processes to incorporate a gender equality perspective in all policies	Government /all actors routinely involved in policy making

The main focus of the MAGEEQ project is on Gender Mainstreaming. As has been shown, there are substantial differences in diagnosis and prognosis between Gender Mainstreaming and previous strategies of gender equality. Moreover, as previous paragraphs have demonstrated, all countries involved in developing and implementing Gender Mainstreaming have done so within the boundaries of their own definitions of gender equality (Behning & Serrano Pascual 2001; Verloo 1999a). Moreover, until now tools and procedures on Gender Mainstreaming often have only been focussing on analytical and educational tools. Tools involving consultation and participation are seldom found, mainly in Gender Mainstreaming initiatives at the local or regional level, even in countries that are known for their consociational policy styles, such as the Netherlands (Verloo 1999a & 2001). The accent on analytical and educational tools indicates a technocratic framing of gender inequality as a policy problem. This is problematic because it denies the (political) character of interpretations of needs (Fraser 1989), and it runs counter to an active involvement of citizens.

Comparative frame analysis

Discourse analysis in general, as well as frame analysis until now, presents problems for comparative analysis: how to develop categories that can analyse discourses at various levels, and that allow for comparison (van Gorp 2001). Frame mapping offers no viable alternative to this problem. Frame mapping (Riechert 1996) is based on the mathematical frequency and co-occurrence of key terms in text. This technique has the advantage that it generates data that are suitable for comparative analyses, but it is too simplistic for "messy" problems. The methodology developed within MAGEEQ attempts to overcome these problems by analysing dimensions of frames rather than constructing typologies of frames (see below). These dimensions allow for a comparable description of various positions. We start from the assumption of multiple, potentially contradictory frames, we do not search for dominant frames necessarily. Parallel to the use of the verb-forms like gendering, labelling and coding to emphasise change and the handling of change we look at framing rather than at frames.

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[3] These four elements are borrowed from social movement theory, especially the work of Snow et al. 1986.

As we intend to contribute to the further development of frame analysis by studying framing in connection to legitimacy and domination, and by contributing to its further methodological development, we will try to track the inner (explicit or implicit) logic of processes of policy frames as a crucial element of exclusion and track the discursive histories that are present in the public discourse, within political institutions (like parliamentary debates and documents), civil society (NGOs) and the media. Our frame analysis approach will put the accent on power relations involved in policy texts. Eventually, depending on the results of MAGEEQ, this approach can be developed into something like Critical Frame Analysis.

Crucial questions are:

- What is the problem (represented to be)?
- Where is it located?
- Who is responsible for it?
- Who has voice in defining the problem?
- Who has voice in suggesting suitable courses of action to resolve the problem?

Locating policy frames

A policy frame has a typical format connected to politics/ policy making. We start from the general assumption that a policy (proposal) will always include a representation of a diagnosis, connected to a prognosis and a call for action. In normal words: that there is a problem, that some solution to this is proposed (including ideas on the causes of the problem, on the ends that can be reached through the use of certain means, and on the desirability of certain outcomes), and that it is made clear who has to do something.

The first point to address for the analysis is what counts as a policy (proposal). Depending on the policy histories and routines in our six very different countries, all teams are defining what will count as policy in the context of MAGEEQ. What seems to be important in any case are official texts declaring policies on gender equality, and official and unofficial texts directed at the EU or at international organisations such as the UN, explaining a country's position on gender equality. Potentially some level of implementation is included in case there is reason to believe that texts and measures taken are actually based on/ representing different ideas on gender equality. Secondary literature (previous research) can have given evidence for this. Evidence of divergent ideas at the level of implementation can be found by including different governance levels, or by having a small round of interviews.

Analysing the framing of gender inequality as a policy problem: dimensions and sensitising questions

Framing needs a qualitative approach to be identified and analysed. The data will be analysed referring to grounded theory techniques (Strauss & Corbin 1990). This involves the analysis of words and phrases used regularly and repeatedly throughout the text; the analysis of words in context: dimensions of specific ideas and understandings implicit in the text-based categories, as well as the organisation of ideas into different positions within these dimensions. The analysis will use Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software, namely Kwalitan (Peters 1998). See Kwalitan manual for further details.

During 2003, the MAGEEQ team has developed a conceptual framework that resulted in a set of Sensitizing Questions for the analysis. (see ANNEX I). This framework has been operational since June 2003, and successfully used by all teams since then. The Sensitizing Questions have been developed using elements from social movement theory, gender theory, discourse analysis and policy theory. The overall structure of the Sensitizing Questions has been taken from social movement theory, as it is in this field that frame analysis has been developed mostly. Based on the work of Snow

and Benford, this basic structure consists of the dimensions of *Diagnosis*, Attribution of Responsibility (renamed *Roles in Diagnosis*), *Prognosis* and Call for Action (renamed *Roles in Prognosis*).

Two main elements have been added to this basic structure. The first one is the element of *Balance*, to be able to distinguish between policy frames to are predominantly Diagnostic and frames that are predominantly Prognostic. Secondly, as policy frames differ from social movement frames in that they do not always originate in specific actors, but can commence in institutions such as administrations or cabinets, committees or spokespersons, an element called *Voice* has been added. This allows to take on board theoretical notions from discourse analysis and genealogical analysis, and will facilitate the later analysis in terms of exclusion/ inclusion and power. Like wise, based on discourse analysis, a sub-element on the *Form* (form of argumentation, dichotomies, metaphors) has been created within the dimensions of Diagnosis and Prognosis.

Within the dimensions of Diagnosis and Prognosis, Carol Bacchi' s path-breaking critique on policy theory has been utilized (in the sub-element of Representation), especially her "What's the problem represented to be?" approach. Gender theory, and especially the work of Walby, Verloo and Roggeband, and Connell supplied sub-elements on Location and Mechanisms of gender inequality. These elements have been elaborated within the conceptual framework of the Dutch Gender Impact Assessment[4]. The dimensions distinguished in this instrument are structures, processes and criteria (Verloo and Roggeband 1996). Structures refer to the core of gender relations, showing which institutions and organisations are most important. In the Dutch instrument, the division of labour, the organisation of intimacy and the organisation of citizenship are seen as essential. This runs parallel to a large extent to Connell's distinction between labour, cathexis and power. Processes refer to mechanisms that produce and reproduce gender relations. They are based on Giddens' structuration theory (Giddens 1984). In this respect, the distribution of and access to various resources is emphasised, next to the rules (interpretations and norms) about or connected to gender. Normative criteria stressed in the Dutch context are Equality in the sense of equality before the law and Equal Treatment in similar circumstances, but also Autonomy, defined as the possibility for women to decide for themselves what is a good life, and Pluriformity: a society where differences are not hierarchical (Verloo 1996; Verloo 2000a). As MAGEEQ is concentrating on the framing of gender equality *Normativity* is highlighted in a separate subsection.

The Sensitizing Questions have been made into an analytical tool, first by making them into a Template, and subsequently by translating them into a (tree)-structure that has been used in the KWALITAN analysis. See Annex I for the Sensitizing Questions.

Methodology: KWALITAN and supertexts

In the process of the MAGEEQ analysis, KWALITAN, one of the available computer tools for qualitative analysis, has been further developed into a tool for analyzing policy texts[5]. KWALITAN is a programme to assist in qualitative analysis. The programme is in English, yet the analyzed texts can be in any language, as Kwalitan links codes, annotations and memos to the original texts. Using the KWALITAN tool also means that MAGEEQ is in the process of constructing a systematically structured database of policy texts about gender equality. This is an additional bonus.

Concerning frame analysis, the problem at hand is that a middle way between discourse analysis and frame mapping needed to be found in the MAGEEQ project in order to be able to do

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4 A gender impact assessment (GIA) is an analysis ex ante of the potential effects of new government policies on gender relations. More formally, the instrument is used 'to compare and assess, according to gender relevant criteria, the current situation and trend with the expected development resulting from the introduction of the proposed policy' (EU 1997: 8).
5 This has been done in a joint venture of the MAGEEQ team and the company that has developed KWALITAN (see www.kwalitan.net).

comparative analyses on a deeper level of understanding than frame mapping would allow for. During the second half of 2003, such a methodology has been constructed. The MAGEEQ method will be further developed, validated and fine tuned within the team. This method is composed of two steps. In the first step carefully selected policy documents are analyzed using the Sensitizing Questions. Guided by the Sensitizing questions codes are chosen carefully to characterize the text. Using KWALITAN the codes resulting from this analysis are linked to (segments of) the texts, and organized in the tree structure. The analysis of each document ends with the construction of a Super-text[6], where summaries on the main dimensions of the Sensitizing Questions are followed by the respective codes about this dimensions. In this way, the Super-texts function as a structured and systematic summary.

Annex II gives information on the structure of the Super-text. In general the supertext contains the codes attached to the document, organised along the main headings, and a short summary that describes the conclusions based on the codes under each heading. The first part contains all sorts of general information that is needed for the comparative study: Place, time, actors, audience, main issue etc. Under Voice, attention is given to perspective (one can think of differences between a text that is some kind of presentation of a certain standpoint, as opposed to a text that is very much presenting an objective reality etc.), and elements that are meant to be able to describe if and how the text positions itself in relation to the context, be it previous documents, other actors, etc. Mostly the Super-text follows the outline of the Sensitising Questions. All things that are considered relevant by the researchers and that do not fit under the main headings can be put under Comments at the end. In the Super-text, absence of anything need not necessarily be coded as such. If a certain dimension does not have any codes, it should be because there is an absence, and not because this point was not considered. This absence can then be analysed in the second round of analysing of the Super-texts.

Because of the use of KWALITAN, the link to the originally analyzed documents, in their original language, is always there and can easily be traced back. At any time, the question: "what has been the reason to attach this code?", or "to which part of the text this code belongs" can be answered. Yet, at the same time, anyone who is literate in the body of theory used, can read and understand the Super-texts. Within the MAGEEQ team and for the comparative analysis this means that the whole team will have access to the whole body of Super-texts constructed. It also means that updating of the database will always be possible after the MAGEEQ project, thereby allowing for further use of the database by the team after the end of the project. The expectations are that before summer 2004 a total number of between 300 and 400 Super-texts (MAGEEQ uses a qualitative sampling, adding texts to analyze until saturation of the analysis) will be compiled and stored in the MAGEEQ database for use in the second step, the Comparative Study.

In the second step of our methodology, the database of Super-texts will be subjected to a second round of analysis, assigning codes to them that are agreed upon by the whole team. Beginning of 2004, the team has started the necessary analyses and discussions to prepare this. Also in this second round KWALITAN will be used, because it allows the generation of matrixes of codes used, and thereby facilitates comparative analysis. Further work needs to be done to make this second step operational, but all the necessary elements are already in place. There is good hope that also convergence analysis will be possible with the material generated. In the course of 2004 this methodology will be fine-tuned by the team towards the Comparative Analysis. The experiences of 2003 are that the Sensitizing Questions are a very productive tool that allows for both linkage to theoretical and political debates and for Comparative Analysis.

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6 Within MAGEEQ, the concept of Super-text is chosen in contrast to the well known concept of a subtext . Whereas a subtext is what can be analysed as an implicit, unstated meaning of a text, a Super-text is this hidden significance made explicit.

ANNEX I **Template sensitising keywords and questions for the MAGEEQ analysis**

Mieke Verloo 1 juli 2003

VOICE
- Who is speaking in the text?
- Who is excluded?
- What are the words used and where do they come from?

DIAGNOSIS
- **Overall representation**

  What is represented as the problem? What is not a problem?

  Which dimensions of gender are (not) addressed in this depiction of the problem?
  - social categories
  - identity
  - behaviour
  - norms and symbols
  - institutions and organisations
- **Mechanisms**

  How is the problem said to be continuing/ reproducing itself?

  Which mechanisms are (not) mentioned:
  - Resources
  - Rules: interpretations and norms
  - (Legitimisation of) violence
- **Form**
  - What is the argumentation / what are conviction techniques that can be found in the text?
  - Does the text use dichotomies in its analysis and diagnosis?
  - Are these dichotomies gendered?
  - What are the metaphors and contrasts used? Are they gendered?
- **Location/ structure**

  Analyse structures of gender inequality: where is the problem located?
  - Organisation of labour
  - Organisation of intimacy
  - Organisation of citizenship
- **Normativity**
  - What is depicted as a norm, and is there a hierarchy of norms? Which norms are absent?
  - What is good? What is bad?
  - Is gender equality mentioned as a norm? What does it mean?

ATTRIBUTION OF CAUSALITY/ RESPONSIBILITY
- Who is seen to have made this a problem?
- Who is responsible for it? Who is suffering because of the problem?
- What is seen as a cause of what?
- Which dimensions of gender are (not) covered?

PROGNOSIS
- Overall representation
  - What should be done to make it right?
  - What is seen as a means to reach a certain goal?
  - What are the suitable courses of action suggested?
  - Which dimensions of gender are (not) covered?
- **Form**
  - What is the argumentation / what are conviction techniques that can be found in the text?
  - Does the text use dichotomies in its prognosis?
  - Are these dichotomies gendered?
  - What are the metaphors and contrasts used? Are they gendered?
- **Mechanisms**

  Which mechanisms are (not) mentioned in how the problem is thought to be solved:
  - Resources
  - Rules: interpretations and norms
  - (Legitimisation of) violence
- **Location/ structure**

  Which structures of gender inequality are addressed in the solution?
  - Organisation of labour
  - Organisation of intimacy
  - Organisation of citizenship
- **Normativity**
  - Which norms are present/ absent in the solution?

CALL FOR ACTION
- Who should do something? Who is not called upon?
- Who has voice in suggesting suitable course of action to resolve the problem? Who is excluded?
- What are the limits of action? Why are some actions thought not to be possible?

BALANCE
- How is the balance between attention for diagnosis and prognosis? Between voice, attribution of causality and call for action?
- What are frictions or contradictions? Between diagnosis and prognosis? Between voice, attribution of causality and call for action?

ANNEX II: SUPERTEXT TEMPLATE
NUMBER/CODE/ TITLE (max 20 signs)
Full title
(In English and in original language)

Country / Place

Issue

Date

Type/status of document

Actor(s) and gender of actor(s) if applicable

Audience

Event / reason / occasion of appearance

Parts of text eliminated

Voice
SUMMARY

Voice(s) speaking

Perspective

References: words/ concepts (and where they come from)

References: actors

References: documents

Diagnosis
SUMMARY

What is represented as the problem?

Why is it seen as a problem?

Causality (what is seen as a cause of what?)

Dimensions of gender (social categories / identity / behaviour / norms & symbols / institutions)

Mechanisms (resources /norms & interpretations / legitimation of violence)

Form (argumentation / style / conviction techniques, / dichotomies / metaphors / contrasts)

Location (organisation of labour / organisation of intimacy / organisation of citizenship)

Attribution of roles in diagnosis
SUMMARY

Causality (who is seen to have made the problem?)

Responsibility (who is seen as responsible for the problem?)

Problem holders (whose problem is it seen to be?)

Normativity (what is a norm group if there is a problem group?)

Active / passive roles (perpetrators / victims etc)

Legitimization of non-problem(s)

Prognosis
SUMMARY

What to do?

Hierarchy / priority in goals

How to achieve goals (strategy / means / instruments)?

Dimensions of gender (social categories / identity / behaviour / norms&symbols / institutions)

Mechanisms (resources / norms & interpretations / violence)

Form (argumentation/style /conviction techniques / dichotomies / metaphors)

Location (organisation of labour / intimacy / citizenship)

Attribution of roles in prognosis
SUMMARY

Call for action and non-action (who should [not] do what?)

Who has voice in suggesting suitable course of action?

Who is acted upon? (target groups)

Boundaries set to action

Legitimization of (non)action

Normativity
SUMMARY

What is seen as good?

What is seen as bad?

Location of norms in the text (diagnosis / prognosis / elsewhere)

Balance
SUMMARY

Emphasis on different dimensions / elements

Frictions or contradictions within dimensions / elements

Comments

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