

Between Success and Disappointment

Gender Equality Policies
in an Enlarged Europe

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Miriam Hoheisel
(eds.)

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Success as well as shattered illusions characterise the experience of European countries in implementing gender equality policies. With the new gender equality acquis, mandatory for all Member States, the European Union (EU) sets a strong incentive for de jure progress. Yet the European influence on the administrative, political and social practice of gender equality is rather weak – particularly in the Eastern European Member States. Reports from eleven Member States describe the problems, but also note the opportunities and challenges that any country implementing gender equality policies has to face.

Susanne Baer and Miriam Hoheisel examine the impact of the EU on gender equality policies and of the transition from socialism to capitalism on gender equality. In part one of this volume Petra Schott provides an overview of the EU's gender equality acquis. Henriette Meseke points out how European structural policy promotes gender equality policies. In part two gender experts from western Europe reflect on experiences with Gender Mainstreaming (GM). The Dutch expert Mieke Verloo emphasises the importance of political framing. Considering the evaluation of the Danish GM process, Karen Sjørup attests that gender equality has not yet arrived in the mainstream of hegemonic discourse. Describing GM at the Danish Ministry of Employment, Agnete Andersen gives an example for its implementation. Claudia Sorger states for Austria that progress has been made in the creation of institutional structures but that GM is not yet firmly anchored in what constitutes everyday work. Elizabeth Villagómez concentrates on GM implementation in a decentralised country in her article on Spain. Part three shows how accession to the EU boosted the establishment of a legal foundation for gender equality. Dalia Marcinkevičienė and Vanda Juršėnienė point out how the EU has impacted positively on law in Lithuania. Mara Kuhl provides insights into the implementation process of GM in Estonia. For Poland, Kinga Lohmann adds the perspective of women's organisations. Petr Pavlik states for the Czech Republic that the EU equality acquis has led to progress in the field of gender equality, but had only little impact on real life. For Bulgaria Lazar Lazarov highlights the national activities for improving women's position in the labour market. Analysing the social and economic situation in Bulgaria, Regina Barendt criticises unsatisfactory implementation of gender equality policies into national policies. Vlasta Jalušič, Roman Kuhar and Ana Frank emphasise lines of tradition in gender equality in Slovenia. In part four Silke Steinhilber concludes with a reasoned critique of current developments and discusses further challenges. An appendix provides further information on the socioeconomic situation of women and men in Europe.

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