# Gender, Intersectionality and the European Public Sphere

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# Issues for Debate

- Methodological reflections and design
- How is gender linked to diversity in different organizations?
- How is gender equality & women's issues being framed in the EU & across Europe ?
- Confrontation of research findings with theories, models & concepts

# Eurosphere: Diversity and the EPS

http://www.eurospheres.org/

- *What are social & pol. actors **views about diversity & EPS**? What models do organizations believe in - a centralized or fragmented (or another model of) European Polity? Organizations' views on EU polity/policies: views on the development of EU-polity; and views concerning EU's involvement and power in policy-making*
- *Do actors/organizations **communicate/ participate** in EURO-networks spaces?*
- *What are their perceptions of **diversity, PS & EPS***

# Gendering The EPS

*Critique of the EP models:*

- The ***liberal*** market model is exclusionary
- The ***republican*** citizenship model – is homogenizing
- The ***cosmopolitan*** model – is built 'from above'
- Only the ***deliberative*** model is able empower women as social & political actors

# Democratic Diversity in the Public Sphere

*Dimensions in public sphere (*Ferree 2002):

- *Who* should participate, on what occations?
- *What* should be the form of content of their contribution to the public discourse?
- *How* should the actors communicate with one another?
- *What* are the desired outcome of the process?

# Guiding Hypothesis

- *Gender makes a difference for attitudes of opinion makers* on the four different sites
- *Presence:* Women are marginalised in the EP; but different positions on the four sites
- *Power*: Women and minortities are both marginalised in the EPS
- *Discourses:* Gender intersects with diversity with various meanings across Europe

# Research Dimensions

- *Where are the women* – presence, voice & power/empowerment
- *Gendering as a process* – framings, arguments & discourse, silencing
- *Diversity & pluralism* – a focus on intersections of gender and diversity
- *Desired outcomes – policies,* models & visions and practice?

# Research Questions

- *To explore and explain the role of women and gender groups in the articulation of the national public sphere(s) & in relation to the four sites* – i.e. political parties, social movements, media and think tanks - if and how they interact, cooperate and negotiate with ethnic minority groups.

- *To explore and explain the role of gender related concerns in the articulation of the national public sphere(/s) and how they relate to issues of diversity in relation to social and political spaces/sites.*

- *To explore and explain the role of gender groups in the articulation of the European Public Sphere (EPS), how they cooperate & negotiate with ethnic minority groups.*

- *To explore and explain the role of gender-related concerns in the articulation of the European Public Sphere and how they relate to issues of diversity, especially to ethno-national concerns.*

# Methodological Reflections: Challenges & limitations

- *Multi-level model* – macro-meso & micro
- *Multiple approaches to the EPS*
- *Comparative approach*: 16 countries, 200 organisations, 1300 interviews
- *Multiple sites*: Political parties, social movements/NGOs, think tanks, and media
- *Data*: Elite interviews, institutional data, media and surveys
- *Methods*: Content analysis, critical frame analysis and discourse analysis of texts

# Preliminary Conclusions

- *The dominant picture*: gender interacts with other factors & categories, i.e. nationality, pol. families, ethnicity/race
- *The EWL is challenged*: from minority women's org. & new (Conservative) women's organizations
- *The dominant picture*: a positive perception of women's SMOs of the link between European integration and gender equality?

# Gendering as a Process

- *New struggles about the meaning of gender equality & women's issues* at the national level and in the EP?
- *Conservative & Socialists in the EP* have different values, models & visions of gender
- *Majority and minority women's org.* have alliances but may have different priorities
- *A Paradox?* No common public sphere – yet many org. belong to transnat. networks

# Intersectionality

- **Dominant national discourses are gendered** - some exclude the unequal other
- **Incusive counter discourses** intersecting gender with ethno-national diversity exist, i.e. in pol. parties & anti-racist org.
- The coupling of gender and ethnicity/race is not a dominant concern in the selected *women's organisations*

# The European Public Sphere

- *Counter discourses* to the EPS: Euro - scepticisms & visions of a social Europe
- *Is the dominant gender discourse in the EP & the EWL is challenged by enlargement?*
- New struggles about the meaning of gender equality & women's rights
- Intersections of gender and ethnicity /race by women's org. as rhetoric and practice

# Confronting Theory and Research

- **Gender and Diversity**: Respondents articulate a dualism between gender and diversity models
- **Gendering the EPS**: Alliances between women & minorities cannot be taken for granted; questions common interests based upon marginalisation
- Challenge to assumptions about a gap between civil society actors and national pol. institutions
- **Diversity:** Respondents express differences in terms of nationality, pol. families, ethnicity/race