

Newsletter #7 - November 2011

Welcome to Winnet8

The Winnet8, have a network of gender researchers in each partner country, coordinated by Malin Lindberg, Sweden and Liisa Horelli, Finland. A benchmarking model for comparative analysis between regions was developed and used of all partners both at the study visits and in the MAG-groups. The result of the study visits, MAGs, thematic workshop and good practices, was reflected in a workshop with the Winnet8 researcher's network. The research workshop was coordinated by the head researchers to secure the result of Winnet8 for the future. It has been important to review the results to secure the contribution to knowledge based and effective regional action plans.

Malin Lindberg, has been involved in writing the context for the regulations for the Winnet8 policy recommendations. At the final conference, the future of a Winnet Centre of Excellence, was discussed and will be a follow up on how to establish a sustainable network of gender researchers in close co-operation with actors such as, Women Resource Centers, Public and local authorities, and Business, for women's participation in Regional Development & economical growth.

Britt-Marie Torstensson

Responsible Communication and Dissemination Winnet8 Working Group



Britt-Marie Torstensson is the coordinator of Winnet8 Component 2. Britt-Marie represents Winnet Sweden and has a long experience from establishing and running Women Resource Centers in Sweden. Britt-Marie is also the Chair of Winnet Europe & Winnet Sweden



The project Winnet8 - what are the goals with the project?

The overall objective with the project Winnet8 is to contribute to regional growth by improving women's participation in the labour market focusing on:

- Horizontally segregated labour markets
- The lack of women in innovation and technology
- The lack of women in entrepreneurship

The project aims to shape regional, national and EU-level policies and development programmes that relate to women's status in the labour market and ensure these policies are integrated into mainstream provision.

What has happened in the Winnet8 project during the fall of 2011?

In this Newsletter we will publish two articles written by our Head researchers Liisa Horelli and Malin Lindberg. You can also read about the Final Conference in Greece.

Researching Winnet8: Summary and Results

Winnet8 is an exceptional project in the sense that it has included from the very beginning the 'quadruple helix' - partners in the form of representatives from the public, private, people and academic sectors. This configuration of partnerships has conspicuously contributed to the results of the project. We have been two researchers in W8, Malin Lindberg and me, whose task has been to document and analyse the W8 aims and their implementation. Thus, we have also reinterpreted the project aims to be "the redistribution of power and resources in regional growth policies for the improvement of the daily life of women and men".

So what have the researchers carried out? And what are the results and impact of Winnet8, as interpreted by the researchers? The summing up of the research has been my task, since Malin Lindberg has written about the analysis of the W8 Action plans. I will first present the adopted theoretical framework and methodology, as well as the measures of implementation. Then, I will discuss the results and draw some conclusions.

The integrative theoretical framework adopted in the research, comprises gender studies, approaches to local and regional development, and concepts of evaluation. I will only deal with the gender concepts here. A variety of definitions exists of equality, such as equality as a human right, as efficiency, quality etc. For example, the Swedish Parliament defines equality, as "Equal opportunities and power of women and men to shape the society and their lives". Others stress the importance of the equal roles of women and men both in production and reproduction. Some people claim that equality is a concept that cannot be separated from diversity and intersectionality, i.e. class, ethnicity, race and age. The point is that *equality and gender have to be continuously defined by the stakeholders involved*. The historical perspectives to equality and their strategies can be analysed into: the perspective of equal treatment with the strategy of human rights (beginning at the end of the 19th century), the women's perspective, with the strategy of empowerment (beginning at the 1960s), and the gender perspective (beginning at the 1990s), with the strategy of gender mainstreaming.

Judith Squires claims that there are three types and models of gender mainstreaming: The first one, based on liberal feminism, is that of inclusion, which applies an integrationist model. The second one, based on radical feminism, is reversal with the model of agenda setting. It focuses, for example, on the positive actions for women. The third one, based on post-modern feminism, is displacement with the transformative model. The types and models of mainstreaming can be used in parallel, depending on the aims and the context of action.

So, how has "gender been done" and what kind of gender mainstreaming has taken place in the context of Winnet8 activities around regional growth policies? We have enhanced with Malin some of the W8 measures through the methods of action research, such as providing a template for and an analysis of the study trips made by the regional Multi actor groups (MAGs), which in turn formed the basis for the subsequent regional action plans. We have also given several papers at the different workshops and conferences during the project. A year ago, a Learning café was organised for the participants of the thematic workshop in Venice. It disclosed that a variety of measures had been applied, but there was a lack of shared visions and multilevel strategies.

The comparative analysis of the Winnet8 women's resource centres (WRCs) revealed that the eight partner countries had only seven (traditional) WRCs, but there were six WRC-like support networks in Poland, Scotland and Finland. In addition, Italy and Portugal presented an ideal WRC.



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The outcomes of the project extend to many levels. The *tangible level* comprises action plans which all have visions with multidimensional strategies, as well as plans for new WRCs (see Malin Lindberg's article). Also the final recommendations and the Good Practice Guide are part of the tangibles. Learning takes place at the *intrapersonal level*, a variety of networks and clusters at the *interpersonal level*. The *methodological level* consists of a great number of gender-sensitive tools and different types of gender mainstreaming. The *cultural level* includes an increase in gender-aware discourse, such as 'equality as a business and economic case', 'WRCs as a creative knowledge environment', etc. Changes affecting the *structural level* still remain to be seen. However, the recommendations given to the European Commission suggest several changes to the regulations of the structural funds, as well as to the future Cohesion Policy and the EU 2020 strategy. Nevertheless, the main result of the project seems to lie in the intensive W8 process that is affecting the European public sphere, which in turn might impact the decision-making over the future structures of gender-aware growth policies.

To sum up, the models of gender mainstreaming applied in W8 have been both integrationist, agenda setting and transformative. Our critical observations include that we, as researchers, could have been used in a more coordinated way. The project has paid too little attention to care structures, such as the Nordic system of day-care. More time should have been spent on the meaning of sustainable growth, whether it only refers to competitiveness or sometimes even to degrowth. Last but not least, Winnet8 lacks an exciting vision for the future action. Would we still have the time to co-construct a vision that would not only benefit the partner countries, but European Union as well? However, the journey with Winnet8 has been exciting and fun.

Summary and analysis of action plans in Winnet8

A part of the research in Winnet8 has concerned the study visit reports and action plans produced by the participating regions. Here, the summary and analysis of the action plans is presented. The full report is available at www.winnet8.eu.

In order to integrate a gender perspective in regional growth policies, Multi Actor Groups (MAGs) have been established within Winnet8, in each of the participating regions. These groups include representatives from managing authorities, local and regional authorities, research institutes, social partners and NGOs. The MAGs have analysed growth policies in their own regions from a gender perspective. These analyses have been used as a springboard for elaborating action plans intended to improve these policies. The MAGs have inspired each other by their different measures for gender equality. This mutual inspiration has been enhanced by the study visits that each MAG carried out in another Winnet8 region. The study visit reports are summarised and analysed in a specific research report available at www.winnet8.eu.

The report on the action plans summarises and analyses the main features of the plans in order to give an encompassing picture of how the MAGs in Winnet8 intend to influence growth policies in their regions to become more gender equal. The data informing the encompassing report is constituted by written action plans from the MAGs in Bulgaria, Scotland, Portugal, Greece, Poland, Finland, Sweden and Italy. In Poland, two MAG's have been active in two different regions. This has resulted in two different action plans for Poland. The action plans comprise approximately 10-20 pages each.

Most action plans in Winnet8 contain clearly articulated visions. The visions concern three main themes: regional growth policies, resource distribution and women's participation/contribution. The Italian action plan envisions "a different institutional approach to gender equality issues, based on integrated policies that, rooted in a regional gender equality code, promote a new cultural model, to overcome gender stereotypes and enhance each person for her/himself." A number of areas are mentioned as crucial by the action plans, such as regional growth, decision making, labour market, entrepreneurship, innovation. The Finnish action plan links several of these areas in its main objective to "promote regional development and growth in the South Ostrobothnian region by increasing gender equality on the labour market."



PhD Malin Lindberg,
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The accounts of the present situation in each region concern three main themes: labour market, entrepreneurship and innovation/ICT. In addition, four smaller themes appear in a few action plans: stereotypes, education, health and violence, even if none of these are mentioned in the original project plan of Winnet8. Within the theme of labour market, three aspects are focused: women's employment rates, gender segregation and part-time employment. Within the theme of entrepreneurship, three aspects can be identified: importance of entrepreneurship for women, levels of entrepreneurship among women and men, as well as initiatives to promote women's entrepreneurship. Within the theme of innovation and ICT, two aspects are discernable: women's contribution to innovation as well as the importance of ICT for women and society.

The measures proposed in the action plans are of three different types: changing policies, increasing women's participation and establishing/securing Women Resource Centres. The two first-mentioned themes are congruent with the general objectives of the action plans. The third reflects the crucial role of Women Resource Centres in promoting women's labour market participation and innovative/entrepreneurial/technological activities, leading to the initiation of the Winnet8 project. The Greek action plan requests "new and permanent structures able to facilitate and influence the policy production for gender equality and the coordination and implementation of projects, actions and activities" and the Scottish demands "dedicated services for women or specific targets to increase women's entrepreneurship."

Existing research on gender mainstreaming reveals that three different measures have to be implemented side by side in order to fundamentally change segregating and hierarchical gender relations in regional growth policies (Squires 2005). These are: inclusion, reversal and displacement. The strategy of inclusion reflects a liberal type of feminism, seeking gender-neutrality and conceiving people as autonomous. What is mainstreamed in this category is primarily formal equality of opportunities, realised by bureaucratic policy processes. The strategy of reversal is associated to the stream of radical feminism, seeking recognition for a specifically female gendered identity and explicitly talking of 'women' as a given category. Mainstreaming is here seen as a way to include women's voices. The strategy of displacement is linked to a post modern type of feminism. There, 'gender' is used as a verb instead of a noun. It is problematised how discourses ascribe gender to people, attributes and activities. Gender mainstreaming is then equivalent to norm diffusion, acknowledging a broad spectrum of identities, experiences and visions. The combination of these strategies is equivalent with recommendations made in several policy strategies and reports, advocating a "twin-track approach" or a "dual gender equality approach" where specific measures for under-represented or unprivileged groups are balanced by measures intended to change the design and implementation of policy programs and policy measures (*Strategy for gender equality between women and men 2010*, *Gender mainstreaming and regional development 2007*, *Position paper 2011*). The Winnet8 action plans thus have to embrace measures at all levels in order to give rise to the intended effects, i.e. to integrate a gender perspective in regional growth policies.

References

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Strategy for gender equality between women and men (2010). Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European economic and social committee and the Committee of the Regions. Brussels: European Commission.



The 12th-14th of September 2011 more than 100 persons attended the final conference for Winnet8. They all met in a warm and sunny Greece. The conference was held in the beautiful town of Kastorá, situated in the region of West Macedonia, up in the mountains by the lake Kastoriá..

Partners from eight countries joined the conference; Finland, Italy, Poland, Scotland, Greece, Portugal, Bulgaria and Sweden. Among the participants were also MAG-members, stakeholders from regional, national and EU level. The project results were presented and many interesting speeches were made. Local Greece dishes were served during lunch and dinner. The kick out of Winnet8 was a success!

Read more on <http://www.winnet8.eu/web/page.aspx?refid=59>

Next newsletter

The last Newsletter from Winnet8 will be published in December 2011.

Agenda winter of 2011

- Dissemination Seminar in Brussels 10th of November
- Steering Group meeting