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Intellectual and 'Real World'[1] Feminism:

Mainstreaming International Gender Norms in the Republic of Ireland

Gemma M. Carney

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the University of Dublin,

Trinity College

August 2004

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[1] Mazey, S. (ed.) 'Introduction: Integrating gender – intellectual and 'real world' mainstreaming' in 'Women, Power and Public Policy in Europe' *Journal of European Public Policy* 7:3 (2000) Special Issue p. 333.

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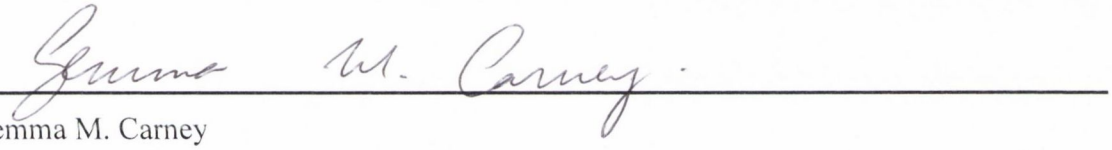

Gemma M. Carney

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SUMMARY

This thesis sets out to examine 'gender mainstreaming' as a scheme for the promotion of gender interests in mainstream policy-making. The thesis identifies gender mainstreaming as a development for feminist theory and practice. Specifically, it argues that 'gender mainstreaming' is a practical implication of feminist activity, with roots in feminist theory. As such, the thesis directly addresses the challenge that 'intellectual and "real world" mainstreaming of gender are interrelated rather than parallel developments' (Mazey, 2000; 334).

The thesis argues that international organisations and institutions, through the work of governments and NGOs at the international level, have created international norms of gender equality.[2] International conferences and subsequent agreements, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, change the agenda of gender equality policy-making at national level. The impact of international gender norms at national level is examined through an analysis of state-level activity before and after the introduction of international standards of gender equality. The thesis uses Haas's (1992; 2) concept of 'epistemic communities' or 'networks of knowledge-based experts' to argue that the global proliferation of gender mainstreaming, via transnational feminist networks and international organisations, represents a significant shift for feminism from its position as a women's rights lobby, to a network of experts with knowledge valuable to mainstream governments. Specifically, the potential of mainstreaming lies in how data about gender issues is gathered in the process of 'mainstreaming gender'; and the role of feminism in providing information to mainstream policy-makers. These arguments are investigated via an in-depth analysis of the adoption and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland.

The methodology employed is effectively a case study approach. The project analyses the introduction and implementation of 'gender mainstreaming' in the Republic of Ireland as one case of a globally proliferating policy. While interviews with national policy-makers provided the main data source for the project, a rigorous critique of the concept of gender mainstreaming, provides

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[2] General societal behaviour is shaped by collectively held norms (Finnemore, 1996 ; 23). In fact, many norms are so institutionalised and taken for granted that they are rarely violated and may even be difficult to recognise (for instance, the norm that economic growth is good) (Finnemore, 1996 ; 23). However, norms can be identified in the discourse of actors as long as they are subject to discussion. Gender issues are by definition subject to discussion as part of the implementation of 'gender mainstreaming'.

the context for interpreting this data. The primary technical and scholarly contribution of the project is the construction of an interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming.

The thesis essentially comprises four parts. The first section outlines the relevance of current debates in feminist theory to questions surrounding the meaning and significance of gender mainstreaming. Part One, therefore, critiques and evaluates current thinking on 'gender mainstreaming' and relates it to broader feminist arguments concerning language and marginality. These Chapters sketch a framework of the relationship between intellectual and real world mainstreaming, allowing for the identification of liberal/feminist divisions as problematic for the policy in empirical Chapters (5 and 6). Part Two identifies a research design and methodology that allows for a substantive critique of gender mainstreaming in both theory and practice. Part Three sets the context for the study in terms of Ireland as a significant case of the global policy of 'gender mainstreaming.' This section also details the interpretation and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland. Most importantly, part three assesses whether the introduction of international norms of gender equality has produced a radically transformative gender policy at national level. As such, the main findings of this research are presented. The thesis argues that a number of key steps between theory and practice are missed in the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland. Gender knowledge, identified as knowledge of gender issues and inequities and how they are (re)produced in policy-making, was a necessary pre-requisite to realising the transformative capacity of gender mainstreaming in practice. This knowledge, manifest in the use of the language of gender equality, and observable in vocabularies and narratives of policy-makers, is necessary to build bureaucratic capacity to mainstream. Co-ordination between intellectual and real world mainstreaming is necessary to increase levels of 'gender knowledge.' In the absence of gender knowledge, gender mainstreaming becomes requisitioned and diluted by dominant political cultural values and policy priorities. In the Irish case, the 'hegemony of market ideology' (True, 2003; 385) combined with performance management policy-making ultimately produces an unchallenging and conformist rendering of gender mainstreaming. The fourth section, containing the final Chapter, assesses the potential for a radical future for gender mainstreaming. This Chapter concludes that regardless of the 'promises and pifalls' (Woodward, 2003) of gender mainstreaming, the policy's practical origins can inform feminist theory. The experience of gender mainstreaming could, in the long-term be used to develop feminist critiques of neo-liberal or conservative political systems.

INTELLECTUAL AND 'REAL WORLD' FEMINISM: MAINSTREAMING INTERNATIONAL NORMS IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

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PART ONE: BUILDING AN INTERPRETATIVE FRAMEWORK

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 The Argument

Political and institutional support for gender mainstreaming is unprecedented for any equality policy. Gender mainstreaming is being implemented across and within national government, supranational organisations and international institutions (Woodward, 1999; Mazey, 2001 ; 2) and has proliferated almost worldwide as the default gender equality policy at state level (True, 2001; 3). Why have governments decided to promote and develop strategies such as gender mainstreaming, and how do they interpret and develop such strategies? It is argued that a number of factors combine to operationalise international gender norms such as international influence, domestic political pressures and political cultural status of equality objectives (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 20). However, there are also arguments that governments only adopt gender mainstreaming as part of an image making exercise, with little or no resources assigned for the implementation of the policy (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 20). Is this the case in the Republic of Ireland? Accession to international commitments has changed the face of Irish gender equality policy by involving the nation in an international gender equality movement that transcends national boundaries of gender equality as a policy goal. The phenomenon is global, but its application reflects local cultural norms. What is the capacity of gender mainstreaming to be a transformative policy tool in the Irish case? In answering the research question, this thesis applies itself to considering Mazey's (2000) view that "'intellectual" and "real world" mainstreaming of gender are interrelated rather

than parallel developments,' (Mazey, 2000; 334). Mazey (2000) implies that research on mainstreaming informs its manifestation in practice, and vice versa. In addressing this observation, the thesis tries to access the radical potential of gender mainstreaming, by highlighting the implications of the concept[3] for knowledge production in policy-making and in feminism. Central to accessing the 'transformative potential'[4] (Mossink, 2001) of gender mainstreaming, is the argument that 'control over knowledge and information is an important dimension of power' (Haas, 1992; 2). Specifically, the potential of mainstreaming lies in how information about gender issues is gathered in the process of 'mainstreaming gender,' and the role of feminism in educating mainstream policy-makers. Language plays an important role in communicating gender mainstreaming, though, the argument that gender mainstreaming is incoherent and, therefore, policy-makers cannot understand it, is dismissed as too simplistic as the thesis develops. Rather, the failure of gender mainstreaming is identified as symptomatic of the incompatibility of economic and equity priorities, based on more profound ideological divisions between mainstream bureaucracy and feminist proponents of gender mainstreaming. It is argued that current dilemmas surrounding the collation of gender disaggregated data, and how it is used to produce gender mainstreaming, are central to debates on knowledge and power between feminists and mainstream policy-makers. A level of technical expertise, available within feminist communities, is necessary to translate data about women into mechanisms to

---

[3] The issue as to whether gender mainstreaming is a policy, a concept, a tool or a method is hotly debated in the literature and amongst policy-makers implicated in making gender integral to policy development. These debates are key to the central arguments of the thesis and are dealt with in Chapters 2 and 3. Throughout the thesis, I have explicitly referred to 'gender mainstreaming' or 'mainstreaming' as either a policy or a concept. The concept refers to the idea that policies should be conceived and developed without gender prejudice and the policy refers to the process of achieving this via gender impact assessment, gender disaggregated data and the use of feminist expertise.

[4] The potential of gender mainstreaming to achieve radical re-structuring of the policy agenda is, perhaps, the main reason for such widespread interest in the phenomenon amongst feminists. Its potential to be transformatory is hotly contested, and generally refers to 'the capacity... for questioning, undermining or transforming gender relations and the structures of subordination' (Young, 1993; 156 quoted in Molyneaux in Jackson and Pearson, 1998; 75).

effectively mainstream gender concerns into everyday policy. It is at this juncture that intellectual and real world mainstreaming must interact, through feminists, employed by mainstream government (femocrats[5]) to produce gender sensitive policies. The thesis uses Haas's (1992; 2) concept of 'epistemic communities'[6] or 'networks of knowledge-based experts' to investigate the implications of this new feminist practice for feminist theory. These arguments are investigated through an in-depth analysis of the adoption and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland.

In the Republic of Ireland, the advent of gender mainstreaming policy establishes gender equality as a legitimate principle of government, regardless of whether political cultural values fully reflect equal status for women (Galligan, 1998). The fact that policy-makers and government must systematically consider gender, in order to comply with international norms, is the beginning of an important normative shift regarding gender relations in the Republic of Ireland. The role of feminist experts, and the production of knowledge about gender amongst Irish policy-makers are discussed in terms that establish the significance of gender mainstreaming for policy-making in the Republic of Ireland. However, the means by which gender mainstreaming is being operationalised presents problems for the policy. These problems, manifest in confused meanings, language

---

[5] Femocrat is an increasingly popular term to describe women in bureaucracies and political institutions. Eisenstein (1996; *xii*) identifies the authentic meaning as 'more restricted, it refers to a woman, feminist by personal conviction, who works within a government bureaucracy at a senior level to advance the status of women in society'.

[6] 'An epistemic community is a network of professionals with recognised expertise and competence in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue area. 'Epistemic communities need not be made up of natural scientists or of professionals applying the same methodology that natural scientists do. Our notion of "epistemic community" somewhat resembles Fleck's notion of a "thought collective" – a sociological group with a common style of thinking' (Haas, 1992; 3).

barriers and obscure vocabularies,[7] are rooted in the liberal democratic framework of Irish policy-making, combined with the 'depoliticization' of gender mainstreaming by its quantification as 'gender proofing' by mainstream institutions (Sutton, 1999; 8). Haas's (1992) conceptualisation of 'epistemic communities' is significant because it demonstrates how 'networks of knowledge based experts' (Haas, 1992; 2) can influence policy when their knowledge is deemed useful by government. The thesis concludes that by establishing a link between knowledge and power in the feminist pursuit of liberation through mainstream institutions, gender mainstreaming has the potential to produce a radical politics in the future. The future, perhaps, may not be through policy-making but rather through establishing a coherent feminist critique of all aspects of social life and political organisation.

This Chapter offers an overview of the main arguments of the thesis, outlining the contribution of this work to political science. In doing so, it offers some detail on each of the seven thesis Chapters, in terms of how they build the argument that gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland represents a politically significant shift for feminism and for policy-making around gender. Most importantly, the Chapter provides an explicit justification for the research, specifically, the research question posed and the methodologies and research approaches used to address it.

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[7] 'One cannot speak 'outside the structure,' either of language or society. Feminists can, however, struggle, from the inside, to speak *against* the structure, by contesting/critiquing the representation of women in language and discourse' (Cameron in Cameron, 1990; 9). In this way, those implementing gender mainstreaming try to articulate a coherent critique of mainstream bureaucracy.

1.2 A Brief Introduction to Gender Mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is commonly identified as a policy initiative arising from the World Conferences on Women beginning in Mexico City in 1975 and culminating in the Fourth World Conference in Beijing, 1995. The *Platform for Action* agreed at Beijing, to which the Irish government is one of 189 signatories (Platform for Action, 1996; 1), articulates gender mainstreaming in the following terms:

> 'governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively' (United Nations, 1996; 11).

In terms of implementation, gender mainstreaming involves the re-organisation of policy processes so that gender equality concerns are integral to the activities of the actors ordinarily involved in the policy-making process.[8] Gender mainstreaming bureaucracies, established in over one hundred countries, now represent a significant challenge to traditional policy-making worldwide (True and Mintrom, 2001; 27).[9] It is an international policy that originated and was developed within the international women's movement, mainly through feminists working in the area of women in development.[10] Gender

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[8] (at http://www.irlgov.ie/justice/Equality/Gender/NDP/Gender1.htm).

[9] The extent of the proliferation of 'gender mainstreaming' is documented in True, J. and Mintrom, M. (2001) 'Transnational Networks and Policy Diffusion: the Case of Gender Mainstreaming' *International Studies Quarterly* (2001) 45, 27-57.

[10] An excellent account of the development of the concepts behind the mainstreaming agenda by those working on 'Women in Development' is offered by Jahan, Roanaq (1995) *The Elusive Agenda: mainstreaming women in development* New York: Zed.

mainstreaming is a culmination of this process in policy-making terms. Through its beginnings in development projects, the policy became specifically designed to redress the inequalities that result from the social construction of gender (Jahan, 1995; 19). An investigation into the theoretical and conceptual origins of the mainstreaming process, undertaken in Chapter 2, reveals it as a clearly feminist agenda. This is evident in that mainstreaming seeks not just to emancipate women, but rather to change the existing social structure, which is gendered, to one which disadvantages neither men nor women (True, 2001; 1). As such, the thesis places feminism[11] at the center of the global movement of 'mainstreaming' by identifying feminists as a transnational 'epistemic community' (Haas, 1992; 1) whose efforts culminated in the global adoption of gender equality policy-making machineries.

1.3 Why Study Gender Mainstreaming?

There are a number of reasons why scholars of gender, International Relations (IR) and policy-making (Mazey, 2000; True, 2001; McCrudden, 1999) have identified gender mainstreaming as a phenomenon meriting substantive academic analysis in a variety of different political manifestations. The principle of gender equality, the foundation stone of gender mainstreaming, is clearly outlined in Articles 2, 3 and 13 of the EU Amsterdam Treaty (Galligan et. al., 2000; 11). The European Commission and all member states of

[11] Feminism is a term that is so widely used in such a wide range of contexts that it has multiple meanings. For the purposes of this thesis, the term refers to the body of knowledge and political action that works on diminishing the reproduction of inequalities between men and women arising from ascribed social and political roles and identities.

the European Union adopted mainstreaming as official gender policy in 1995 (Verloo, 2001; 5). The Council of Europe has also endorsed gender mainstreaming as the way forward for the achievement of gender equality. It is this political popularity that has made gender mainstreaming the most prominent strategy for the achievement of gender equality currently available, as such it merits substantive analysis.

However, the adoption of gender mainstreaming by over 100 national governments (True, 2001; 27) has raised many questions surrounding the meaning and interpretation of gender mainstreaming, its primary goals, its origins in development policy and its limitations as a strategy for achieving gender equality. The thesis uses these central questions to build an interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming in Chapters 2 and 3. The interpretative framework is built by, firstly, clarifying key theoretical terms. This is achieved in Chapter 2 which draws on current definitions and interpretations of gender mainstreaming in the rapidly expanding official and academic literatures on the topic (Woodward, 1999, 2001, 2003, Verloo, 2001, Mossink, 2001, Squires and Wickham-Jones, 2004). Chapters 3 and 4 form the foundation on which this thesis becomes a systematic attempt to understand and explain gender mainstreaming, particularly the relation between the theory and practice of gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming has been variously described as 'a tool, sometimes a process or method, and sometimes as a strategy' (McKay and Bilton, 2000; 2). Discussions of the literature pertaining to gender mainstreaming, gender and development and women in development in Chapter 3 provide an extensive review of the literature on the nature of gender mainstreaming. This review combines with discussions of the methodologies available for studying strategic gender policies, and the dearth of

data on gender in Chapter 4 to provide context and background to the main original contribution of this thesis: a detailed study of the adoption and implementation of the policy in the Irish context. The thesis then engages in an empirical analysis (Chapters 4, 5 and 6), which investigates the transformative potential of gender mainstreaming in the Irish case. This analysis is concerned with the integration of rational-bureaucratic policy practices with the theoretical and political ideals from which gender mainstreaming derives. Here the thesis draws on previous work of 'inside agitators' (Eisenstein, 1996) to articulate the complex relationship between feminist and bureaucracy. Moreover, the role of language, and ultimately ideology,[12] in facilitating and/or hampering this relationship is discussed. Haas's (1992; 27) conception of an epistemic community as: 'a concrete collection of individuals who share the same world view (or *episteme*)... epistemic communities are channels through which ideas circulate from societies to governments as well as from country to country,' is used as the basis on which arguments about feminism, knowledge and dialogue are used to explain the multiple definitions of gender mainstreaming and provide a way out of the contestability of the concept and practice that has developed. The result is an articulation of an interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming constructed on a theoretical basis that can inform the analysis of policy development, as argued in Chapters 6 and 7.

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[12] The Oxford English dictionary defines ideology as: 'A systematic scheme of ideas, usually relating to politics or society, or to the conduct of a class or group, and regarded as justifying actions, especially one that is held implicitly or adopted as a whole and maintained regardless of the course of events' (at http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/ideology). Throughout the thesis, the term ideology is used in the sense employed by Eisenstein (1996), who notes the centrality of the ideology of 'social liberalism' and 'a fair go' in establishing 'the necessary preconditions in Australian political culture for the rise of femocrats' (Eisenstein, 1996; 3). '..social liberalism meant a shared belief that governments needed to intervene in the processes of industrial capitalism so as to mitigate the painful effects of the system on those least able to withstand them' (Eisenstein, 1996; 5). She described the rise of neo-liberalism in the 1980s as 'a 180-degree turn from the "nation-building" functions of the old social compact' (Eisenstein, 1996; 186).

Adopting an interpretative approach to studying gender mainstreaming enables a substantive review of the goals of feminism as a political project. The internationalisation of gender equality policy and the adoption (to a greater or lesser degree) of feminist ideals by mainstream bureaucracy are primarily the result of feminist efforts at international and national level. The internationalisation of gender equality policy suggests the beginning of a global recognition that gender is a 'complex social system' (Crawford, 1995; xii) rather than a rigidly bounded dichotomous 'sex' variable. Significantly, the widespread introduction of 'gender mainstreaming' appears to be evidence of the infiltration of feminist ideas and interests into mainstream policy-making (Baden and Goetz, 1997).[13] The thesis argues that gender mainstreaming was observable as a political demand amongst women's groups at UN World Conferences on Women. Its launch as official UN policy, requires national governments to translate political ideals into effective policy-making tools. This process of translation is investigated by drawing on literatures adjacent to the scholarship on gender mainstreaming, mainly 'women in development' and 'gender and development' literatures (Goetz, 1997; Moser in Grant and Newland, 1991; 99), and the literature on political processes and outcomes of UN World Conferences on Women (Karl, 1995; Jahan, 1995).

The adoption of a 'mainstreaming' strategy, by an emancipatory movement traditionally occupying a marginal voice at domestic and international level is significant. The implications of gender mainstreaming for feminist knowledge and activity are discussed

[13] Hafner-Burton and Pollack (2002; 345) identify a significant role for transnational women's movements in using 'increasingly sophisticated communications networks' to facilitate the 'rapid and nearly universal acceptance of gender mainstreaming' (Hafner-Burton and Pollack, 2002; 340).

throughout the thesis. This same Chapter identifies the conception of gender mainstreaming within international feminist activism as integral to understanding the problems and potentialities for the policy at the domestic level. Chapter 2 concludes that the conceptual development of gender mainstreaming has followed rather than preceded its practical implementation (Corner, 1999), resulting in a number of specific challenges for the development of the policy on both these levels. This is a significant contribution as thus far, few studies have attempted to conceptualise gender mainstreaming as a tiered policy-making process, meriting development as both a contested concept for feminist theory, and as an emancipatory policy tool at the level of practice.

The majority of publications on gender mainstreaming to date have limited themselves to technical discussions of gender mainstreaming in specific national or institutional contexts (Mazey, 2000; Mossink, 2001). Feminist international relations has made some attempts to analyse the proliferation of gender mainstreaming as an international norm (True, 2001; True and Mintrom, 2001). By concentrating on the context behind the adoption of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland, and developing a coherent framework to understand gender mainstreaming as a global project, this research reveals a way forward for much of the debate surrounding gender mainstreaming within feminist communities which is fast dividing into 'yes' and 'no' camps.[14] The final Chapter of the thesis concludes that a multilateral approach to the process of mainstreaming could provide

[14] For instance, Zalewski (in Braig and Wölte, 2002) dismisses gender mainstreaming as nothing more than an attempt by neo-liberal governments to phase out women-centred policy-making, while True (2001; 2003) sees the potential of gender mainstreaming to access power in political institutions.

better theoretical development and technical innovation regarding implementation procedures for gender mainstreaming.

The final impact of this research relates to the opportunities and challenges that the impact of international standards, promoted through international organisations, pose for national level policy-making, with Ireland as the case study. The thesis argues that the international agreement launched at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing in 1995 provided a novel approach to gender equality policy-making which replaced a national framework dating from the 1970s. Chapter 5 provides a detailed analysis of the pre-mainstreaming gender equality agenda in Ireland, concluding that a process of internationalisation, beginning with EEC membership in 1973, is precipitated by a combination of pressure from international organisations and the lack of desirable alternatives within national bureaucracy, which has traditionally had limited interest and investment in gender equality. The adoption of international standards of gender equality required innovation on the part of domestic policy-makers, and continues to challenge established policy-making procedures. This research, therefore, is of interest to those trying to develop effective, strategic policy initiatives even beyond the gender equality remit.

1.4 The Literature

Chapter Three includes a substantive review of sections of the academic literature immediately relevant to the main arguments of the thesis. The literature on gender equality and feminism in the understanding and implementation of gender mainstreaming is assessed (Rees, 1998; Elgstrom, 2000; Mazey, 2000; Mossink, 2001; Bennett and Booth, 2002; Woodward, 1999, 2001, 2003). This literature provides important insights into the mechanics of gender mainstreaming but reports numerous and often conflicting discourses and interpretations of gender mainstreaming. As a result, I divide the literature into two sections, that which conceives of gender mainstreaming as a practical policy tool and that which, employs the term 'international gender norm' as a more appropriate articulation of the process. The absence of an agreed definition of gender mainstreaming is addressed with provision of a vocabulary of gender mainstreaming. Initially, lack of definition of gender mainstreaming was thought to be a key obstruction to the implementation of the policy in this research. As such, an analysis of language as a medium of concept change and renewal was used to explore the development of gender mainstreaming, and the literature on gender and language became integral to constructing an interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming. Later, closer analysis revealed that language difficulties resulted from more profound ideological barriers to the successful implementation of gender mainstreaming, at least in the Irish case (Chapters 5 and 6). The issue of language became a means of identifying how the theory-practice gap was manifest in lack of communication, co-ordination and ultimately policy momentum in implementing gender mainstreaming. Finally, Chapter 3 provides a substantive review of

the feminist literature relevant to arguments about language, appropriation and the construction of knowledge. Specifically, the Chapter assesses the role of femocrats in the proliferation of gender knowledge required to implement gender mainstreaming. Though thesis as a whole is an investigation of bureaucratic politics, the literature on gender and bureaucracy is also reviewed, in order to draw on the experience of similar policy initiatives from elsewhere. Throughout the thesis 'gender knowledge' refers to understandings and beliefs about the social world, informed from feminist scholarship and activism, that gender, as opposed to sex, is a socially constructed criterion on which access to resources, education and material wealth are decided. 'Gender knowledge' refers to knowledge of how this social and political stratification evolved and what measures can be taken to understand and eventually alleviate it.[15] The idea of norms, shared understandings and ultimately knowledge of the social world is integral to the social constructivist approach underpinning the feminist perspective taken throughout the thesis. Chapter 3 concludes that gender mainstreaming provides an opportunity for feminist theorists, activists and policy-makers to construct a coherent feminist critique of mainstream policy-making. Specifically, gender mainstreaming offers an opportunity for feminists to articulate a coherent and internally positioned critique, 'to speak against the structure' (Cameron in Cameron, 1990; 9), and ultimately construct coherent alternative political realities.

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[15] Feminist economists argue that patriarchal interpretations of what constitutes 'the individual' have unequal repercussions for tax codes. For instance, Nelson (1996; 98) argues that 'The language of "the individual" as a unit...tends to focus attention on the adult earners as the only tax-relevant human beings, with neither notions of dependency and other aspects of human relation put into the background.' Were insights like these integrated into policy development, new conceptualisations of the household/individual/family may change the economic status of groups currently identified as irrelevant to tax policy. A good example of substantive change for unpaid carers would be the introduction of tax breaks for childcare costs.

1.5 Research Design and Methodology

Decisions regarding research design and methodology for the thesis were influenced by the experience of working on a government sponsored project to develop performance indicators of gender equality for the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in 1999.[16] The small number of observations, the absence of relevant gender disaggregated data, the lack of a basic, transferable definition of gender mainstreaming and its relative youth as a policy, (officially introduced to the Republic of Ireland in 1996), rendered a quantitative research design unsuitable for addressing the research question at the time this research project was initiated (2000/2001). It was decided that a qualitative methodology would interpret the introduction of international gender norms more accurately. Justifications for methodologies chosen to address the research question 'What is the capacity of gender mainstreaming to become a transformative policy tool in the Irish case?' are offered in Chapter 4. The Chapter includes a general discussion of gender statistics, a note on the construction of indicators for the 1999 report and the importance of gender disaggregated data in the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Chapter 4 also describes the empirical model in terms of the relative influence of the UN, EU, institutionalised feminism and domestic policy-makers in bringing about the adoption of gender mainstreaming as official government policy on gender equality in 1996. As stated earlier, a number of issues rendered semi-structured interviewing rather than survey

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[16] Galligan, Y. et. Al. (2000) *The Development of Mechanisms to Monitor Progress in Achieving Gender Equality in Ireland* Dublin: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

sampling a more effective methodology.[17] Specific indicators of gender mainstreaming policy – the introduction of gender impact assessment forms as statutory instruments, the existence of committees on gender mainstreaming and other institutional structures - are identified as evidence that gender mainstreaming is a functioning policy within Irish bureaucratic structures. To conclude, Chapter 4 argues that while statistics are useful in making the case for the existence of gender inequality (pay gaps, participation rates, health statistics),[18] qualitative data and analysis were necessary to ascertain: 1) why gender mainstreaming was introduced and; 2) the extent of its potential to produce radical changes to gender hierarchies.

1.6 The Irish Case

As the thesis is concerned with the adoption and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland (1996), it is necessary to provide some context and background to the Irish case. Chapter 5 establishes the gender equality agenda previous to gender mainstreaming, the role of Irish political culture in supporting that agenda, national investment in gender equality policy as opposed to other policy areas, and implementing structures for gender mainstreaming. The political significance and mode of construction

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[17] This decision has since been justified by the failure of quantitative indicators of equality (gender impact assessments) used by Irish policy-makers to produce meaningful measures in recently published evaluations (ESRI, 2003). Policy-makers failed to effectively report on the quantitative impact of particular measures on gender because they simply deemed gender to be irrelevant to general policy issues. These issues are discussed in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

[18] Statistics on all aspects of Irish women's lives, gathered in preparation of performance indicators of gender equality are available in Galligan, Y., Ward, M., O'Donovan, A., Carney, G., Schon, E. (2000) *The development of mechanisms to monitor progress in achieving gender equality in Ireland.* Dublin: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

of the two blueprints for gender equality - Report of the Second Commission on the Status of Women (1993) and the National Plan for Women (2002) are compared in Chapter 5. The influence of international agreements and EU directives on the changing gender equality agenda at national level is also assessed. These analyses are offered as part of a general argument that the gender equality agenda evolved, through a process of internationalisation, from a process of legislative reform (1970s onwards) to its current 'mainstreaming' format.

1.7 The Role of Data

Chapter 6 describes the framework for implementation (the National Development Plan, [NDP]) for gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland. The status of the NDP Gender Equality Unit as a centre for technical assistance and the necessity of training initiatives to enable policy-makers to implement gender mainstreaming are discussed in some detail. The Chapter draws conclusions from an in-depth analysis of the practice of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland, which contribute to theoretical work on gender mainstreaming. The Chapter concludes that gender mainstreaming was introduced in the Republic of Ireland in 1996 as part of a global movement towards 'mainstreaming,' which is observable in changes in the discourse of global feminist activists, international organisations and national political institutions. The new discourse is one where a policy of mainstreaming, rather than women-centred policies is pursued. Language, female

marginality and communication problems were assumed to be significant factors in understanding the picture of gender mainstreaming drawn from the data gathered at first.[19] However, once the reasons behind the communication problems experienced by femocrats and bureaucrats were sought, it became apparent that ideologically founded divisions between 'intellectual and real world mainstreaming' (Mazey, 2000) provided more profound obstacles to the policy's success. Ideological differences had previously been identified as key challenges to integrating gender and development.

> 'It is possible that, at the core of the problems in efforts to institutionalise gendered policy dialogues, lie the conflicting discourses of the gender and neo-liberal policy frameworks' (Bangura, 1997; 30).

Notwithstanding these contests, the final Chapter imagines a radical future for gender mainstreaming[20] based on maximal interpretations of the concept[21], and multilateral development of the policy on the part of feminist political actors and intellectuals.

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[19] This is in line with findings from elsewhere. Bhatta (2001; 26) argues that gender training for decision-makers should focus on 'the importance of language and masculine terminology in rendering women invisible or inferior' (Ashworth, 1996; 5 quoted in Bhatta, 2001; 26).

[20] While the literature is divided most authors recognise the *potential* of gender mainstreaming to 'bring a gender dimension' to all aspects of politics and governance (Hafner-Burton and Pollack, 2002; 342; Woodward, 2003; True, 2003). Interestingly, the literature on mainstreaming initiatives in development policy are less optimistic about the potential of gender mainstreaming to be anything other than a tokenistic appeasement of the women's movement by governments (Jackson, in Goetz, 1998; 175).

[21] The thesis identifies how the interpretation of gender mainstreaming affects its development as a policy. Minimal interpretations have acted as self-fulfilling prophecies in producing weak manifestations of gender mainstreaming in practice (Irish case, this research). A maximal interpretation, such as that offered by Wichterich (in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 49), would engage in 'the deconstruction of power regimes and of gendered hegemonic systems, in order to unmask and expose their underlying male bias...The reconstruction of knowledge and political systems through the systematic and coherent inclusion of the missing links, through redefining human rights, rendering visible a feminist perspective on sustaining and caring, justice, security, livelihood, development and peace.'

1.8 Is there a radical future for gender mainstreaming?

This thesis has tested the degree to which gender mainstreaming has been transformative in one specific case (Ireland), and identifies the opportunities and barriers to delivering its radical potential. Chapter seven revisits the relationship between intellectual and real world mainstreaming (Mazey, 2000) and the role of epistemic communities in promoting gender mainstreaming at the national level (Haas, 1992). In this way, the Chapter draws theoretical conclusions from the research, elaborating on conceptual insights gleaned from the Irish case. A number of implications of gender mainstreaming for global feminism are identified from the Irish case. Firstly, if gender mainstreaming has developed primarily at the level of practice, does this signify a lack of co-ordination between feminist activists and theorists? Do the divisions within feminism, revealed by gender mainstreaming, imply that it is impossible to develop effective practices in the absence of a coherent theoretical base? Will the current theory-practice gap (True, 2003) result in the idea of 'mainstreaming' as a feminist policy method becoming marginalised *within* mainstream bureaucracy? Finally, the Chapter concludes that while many of these questions have serious implications for feminism, gender mainstreaming also raises a number of opportunities for feminism. These relate to the creation of a common language to articulate the priorities of mainstream and feminist policy-makers. A robust and articulate language of mainstreaming is necessary if it is to avoid appropriation by the macro-political context into which it is integrated (von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 65). Also, there is potential to develop the concept of gender as a relational category facilitating the critique of gendered structures based on human agency rather than the

emancipation of women, *per se* (Peterson, 1992). The Chapter concludes with a synopsis of the contribution of the thesis in terms of the explicit articulation and conceptual development of gender mainstreaming, especially in relation to the increasing legitimacy of knowledge about gender issues, and the mainstream-feminist dialogue crucial to garnering the transformative potential of the policy. Finally, the long-term impact of gender mainstreaming on feminist and mainstream politics is discussed.

CHAPTER TWO.

PRACTICE V. THEORY: THE EVOLUTION OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

2.1 Introduction

The idea to 'mainstream gender' arose in response to late 20th century realisation that rights based legislation failed to produce *de facto* gender equality.

> 'Recent efforts to discover a way to move the equality debate beyond formal equality have put forward an alternative strategy to achieve substantive equality commonly referred to as mainstreaming (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 15).

Starting with the launch of gender mainstreaming at the Beijing conference in 1995 this Chapter traces the evolutionary path of 'gender mainstreaming' back to its predecessors in development policy. In analysing 'women in development' (WID) and the later 'gender and development' (GAD) policy, (Goetz, 1997; Moser in Grant and Newland, 1991; 99) the Chapter presents an evolutionary account of 'gender mainstreaming' in an international context (Karl, 1995; Jahan, 1995). The thesis conceptualises the role of feminist activists and scholars as constituting an *epistemic community* who develop knowledge about gender and communicate that knowledge to governments and bureaucrats via 'gender mainstreaming.' In this way,

> '...governments and other organisations may be said to learn through the evolution of consensual knowledge' (Haas, 1992; 30).

As the process of communication between feminism and mainstream policy-makers is incremental, knowledge about gender equality and the means for achieving it in

mainstream institutions has evolved slowly rather than emerged fully formed (Woodward, 1999, 2001, Verloo, 2001, Mossink, 2001; Booth and Bennett, 2002). The case study (Chapters 5 and 6) will examine, firstly; the capacity and effectiveness of the epistemic community (femocrats) to communicate knowledge to the Irish government, and, secondly; the capacity of government officials to engage with that new knowledge in a way that produces new and different policies. In establishing this argument, Chapter 2 outlines the limitations and goals of gender mainstreaming as a policy initiative as discussed in the available literature and by respondents for this project. It concludes that the conceptual development of gender mainstreaming has followed, rather than preceded its practical implementation (Corner, 1999), resulting in a number of specific challenges for the development of the policy on both these levels.[22]

The formation of gender mainstreaming within international feminist activism is integral to understanding these challenges. Questions about the origins, development, goals and limitations of gender mainstreaming in theory and practice are put. These questions arise from the central research question: 'What is the capacity of gender mainstreaming as a transformative policy tool in the Republic of Ireland?' The meaning and interpretation of gender mainstreaming is a central debate in the academic literature (Woodward, 2001, 2003; Mazey, 2000). Debates about meaning and interpretation were also evident in the 2002 interviews with Irish policy-makers.

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[22] These challenges include getting agreement between practitioners on a definition of gender mainstreaming (Moser, 1993; 5). In the long-term, perceptions of gender mainstreaming have consequences for what gender mainstreaming implies for other policies. The most significant constraint for gender and development was identified as the theory-practice gap: 'Moser blames feminist researchers for the gap between theory and gender planning' (Wieringa, 1994; 835).

> 'One of the main problems with gender mainstreaming, I think, is that nobody has a clue what it means, including the civil servants who are working on it' (Author Interview, R22, September, 2002).[23]

Is gender mainstreaming a practical policy tool or a normative political concept? Why did gender mainstreaming appear on the Irish gender equality policy agenda in 1996? Why is there so much disagreement about the meaning of gender mainstreaming? How can this project contribute to addressing the questions raised in the literature? This Chapter begins to construct an interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming around these questions. The construction of an interpretative framework that moulds theoretical and policy-oriented work on gender mainstreaming is in response to Mazey's claim that, 'In reality, intellectual and 'real world' mainstreaming of gender are interrelated rather than parallel developments' (2000; 334). A discussion of the goals and limitations, and the origins, definitions and interpretations of gender mainstreaming in this Chapter, uncovers the inter-relation of 'real world' and intellectual mainstreaming.

Mapping the development of theoretical and practical gender mainstreaming is begun by investigating the origins of gender mainstreaming in 'global feminism,' via international organisations and, specifically, the relation between these political groupings and domestic level policy-making. Evidence and examples drawn from an in-depth analysis of the Irish interpretation of gender mainstreaming provide a vehicle to articulate some of the issues and challenges faced by gender mainstreaming. Applying Haas's (1992) conception

[23] Interview references are coded to protect the identity of the respondents.

of an epsitemic community to the role of feminism in gender maintsreaming's development, provides a framework within which current debates, misunderstandings and stagnations of the mainstreaming process can be articulated and understood. Moreover, this interpretative framework provides a series of conclusions on the process so far, as well as coherent suggestions for further work in theory and practice (outlined in Chapter 7).

An examination of the lack of clarity surrounding the meaning of gender mainstreaming is central to the development of an interpretative framework for the policy for a number of reasons. Definitional problems, identified as one of the primary limitations of gender mainstreaming, give rise to a number of further problems in practice in the Republic of Ireland. Essentially, when launched, gender mainstreaming was articulated in an indeterminate fashion so as to appeal to a wide variety of institutions: national governments, non-governmental community groups and women's organisations; the International Labour Organisation or the European Union, to name a few. One possible reason for launching a general definition was that a less deterministic definition of gender mainstreaming would allow institutions to interpret the policy according to particular aspects of policy-making. Whether one was developing a national level transport policy (national government), providing an adult education service for women in the home, running a rape crisis centre (voluntary women's groups), researching labour economics (ILO), or gender proofing the European Structural Funds (EU), a means of applying the principle of 'mainstreaming' could be devised. However, in many cases, the indeterminacy of the concept 'gender mainstreaming' made it difficult for some

organisations to develop policy tools that challenged established inequalities, to the extent where policies could be re-formulated to take account of differential impacts on men and women. In some cases, gender mainstreaming, because it was not a clear and specific goal, was deemed unimportant, or too vague for policy-makers to develop. In this way, the simple matter of producing a workable definition of gender mainstreaming revealed itself as considerably complex once policy-makers began to think about 'mainstreaming' particular policy activities.

As such, the goals and limitations of gender mainstreaming, identified in the literature and by policy-makers are closely related to the complex and multi-faceted origins of gender mainstreaming 'as a bastard child[24] of Gender in Development' initiatives and Environmental Impact Assessment' (Woodward, 1999; 133). This thesis argues that the stilted conceptual development of gender mainstreaming is related to the marginal status of feminism, (itself an internally divisive school) on the one hand, and gender equality policy on the other. The result has been an unorthodox development where theories of gender mainstreaming have tended to be constructed in hindsight, subsequent to the initiation of policy-making machineries. The advancement of the concept from feminism to bureaucracy is reviewed in the following discussion of the genesis of gender mainstreaming in feminist movements and organisations.

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[24] 'Bastard child' an interesting choice of words for Woodward (2001) to use in the context of a feminist analysis, given that it implies that legitimacy is dependent solely on patrilineage. Undoubtedly, this inference is unintentional as Woodward probably wishes merely to convey that gender mainstreaming represents the unconventional merging of previous policy initiatives relating to the environment and gender and development. That said, the case study will demonstrate (Chapters 5 and 6) how gender maintsreaming's 'illegitimate' beginnings later hamper its credibility as *bona fide* policy when it enters mainstream bureaucracy.

2.2 The Origins of Gender Mainstreaming in Global Feminism: Epistemic Communities

This research builds on Steinstra's (1994) *Women's Movements and International organisations* and True's (2001) analysis of gender mainstreaming, by considering the role of 'global feminism' in the conception and development of gender mainstreaming. This section discusses the main actors in the process of exchanging gender mainstreaming from an idea developed at international conferences, amongst women's organisations and in development policy into a legitimate policy popular with hundreds of mainstream governments. The primary task of this Chapter is to identify the normative foundations on which the 'mainstreaming' project is based. In doing so, it establishes the heritage of 'gender mainstreaming' norms in the international women's movement (Steinstra, 1994; True, 2001). It is argued that the interaction of feminist organisations with international organisations has prompted the UN to facilitate the spread of feminist international gender norms.[25] The Chapter identifies the role of feminist activists at national and international level in the development of gender mainstreaming from conception to implementation at the national level. Haas (1992; 17) identifies the particular success of transnational epistemic communities, a description that succinctly describes the global proliferation of gender mainstreaming:

> 'A transnational community's ideas may take root in an international organisation or in various state bodies, after which they are diffused to other states via the

[25] 'Thus, transnational networks...are the primary mechanism transmitting emerging global gender norms to states and translating them into very different national lexicons' (True and Mintrom, 2001; 38).

decision makers who have been influenced by the ideas. As a result, the community can have a systematic impact.'

Experts such as Woodward (1998; 2001; 2003), Verloo (2001), True (2001; 2003) and Mazey (2000) constitute an epistemic community of considerable influence given the level of uncertainty surrounding gender mainstreaming. Also, the community of gender experts known as 'femocrats' extends the epistemic community beyond academe to co-habitation with bureaucrats. Femocrats are at the centre of what is identified as the interrelatedness of intellectual and real world mainstreaming. This section is integral to establishing an interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming as it examines the role of feminism as a political movement and as a network of gender knowledge experts in four key areas. Firstly, in articulating the causes and effects of gender inequality. Secondly, in helping to devise methods to address these problems, thirdly, in framing gender equality as an issue for debate, and fourthly in proposing specific policies and identifying points for negotiation on the mainstreaming issue (Haas, 1992; 2). These are the four core activities of epistemic communities identified by Haas (1992) in his argument that 'control over knowledge and information is an important dimension of power and that the diffusion of new ideas and information can lead to new patterns of behaviour and prove to be an important determinant of international policy coordination' (Haas, 1992; 3). These four activities represent the key stepping stones in moving from idea to articulation, communication, engagement and action. They link problems with communicating gender mainstreaming to later more concrete obstacles in terms of producing gender equality policy.

Steinstra (1994) recognises the potential of women's movements in offering a world order based on different assumptions about gender relations.

> 'Another way to explore the impact of global women's movements is to consider their potential for creating a counter-hegemonic presence at the level of the world order' (Steinstra, 1994; 158).

Also, Whitworth (1997; 73) uses this analysis to demonstrate how international organisations can be used by activists, as sites of political struggle against the status quo. The activities of transnational women's networks in the diffusion of international gender norms (i.e. 'gender mainstreaming'), has been identified as evidence of such struggle (True, 2001). Even at the level of rhetoric, international political and institutional support provides a crucial legitimating buttress for gender equality issues at domestic level. For instance, the then Minister for Equality and Law Reform Mervyn Taylor, in the Irish report to Beijing states:

> 'The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September, 1995, takes place at a time when women's issues are taking their rightful place at the centre of the international agenda.'[26]

As such, the recent global proliferation of gender mainstreaming policy-making machineries arises from the mobilisation of large-scale feminist activity. Global feminist activity allows for the exchange of ideas amongst women, unhindered by the expectations for their gender in national level political life (Dutt, 1995; 307; Mahon and Morgan in Galligan, Ward and Wilford, 1999; 59). This process is institutionalized by international

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[26] Department of Equality and Law Reform (1994) *United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women: National Report of Ireland* Dublin: Stationery Office. pp. iii.

conferences such as those sponsored by the UN during the UN Decade for Women 1975-1985. Indeed, Ward (1999; 220) declares that UN conferences at Brussels (1976), Bangkok and New York (1980) and Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995) are responsible for establishing the foundations of the feminist principles evident in present day international feminist politics. Additionally, international organisations and conferences facilitate the development of a shared language, derived from commonalities across and within feminisms. Communication between like-minded groups at the international level leads to both mutual understanding and eventually, the ability to articulate a coherent alternative vision of the world. This argument is also asserted by Karl:

> 'women learned more about the concerns of women around the world and in so doing many women lost some of the naiveté and the complacency that allowed them to accept the status quo in their own countries' (Karl, 1995; 148).

This is especially relevant in the Irish case when one considers Connolly's argument that the language of the Irish Constitution clearly positions Irish women at the bottom of the political and social hierarchy in terms of rights and freedoms. In reference to the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Group, convened in the mid 1990s, Connolly (in Galligan, Ward and Wilford, 1999; 34) states:

> 'Although the group did not make any specific recommendation in relation to the Adam's rib language of the constitution, it did express the view, that the principle of gender-inclusiveness should be observed in the wording of the constitution and that there should be consistent adherence to this principle throughout the text of the constitution'

Language that was deemed appropriate in 1937 was no longer acceptable to members of mainstream political institutions in 1996. These changes suggest that language is an important indicator of change in social and political power structures[27] and also that epistemic communities, in this case national and international women's movements, are important facilitators and even translators in the evolution of new norms regarding gender relations.

Nevertheless, those working in the international women's movement and in development policy operate outside mainstream politics. While women gathered to discuss strategies that would bring about change, they still operated primarily at the margins of national political institutions. If feminist organizations form the bedrock of knowledge of gender issues, and feminist organizations by definition critique rather than join mainstream policy-making institutions, then much of the expertise needed to operationalize gender mainstreaming exists outside mainstream bureaucratic and political structures. The result is a kind of 'capture'[28] of the mainstreaming agenda by feminist academics and activists. 'Capture' in this sense implies control of the knowledge base necessary to implement gender mainstreaming. Haas (1992; 7) describes the process by which bureaucrats defer to experts as the construction of a 'knowledge elite.' The almost exclusive presence of

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[27] While it is now widely recognised amongst critical theorists and discourse analysts that power is constituted in language (and language use), it is also arguable that on a more basic level the occurrence of certain words denotes the presence of a particular idea, or in this case policy. One of the first means of acquiring semantic power is to develop a vocabulary, an armoury that allows for the expression of certain ideas. The term 'language' as used in this thesis, therefore, refers to the emergence of a new vocabulary of feminist critique through the development of gender mainstreaming. Femocrats becoming literate in the language of gender mainstreaming will 'facilitate critical thought, opposition and finally rebellion' (Cameron, 1990; 5).

[28] The term 'capture' here is implied in the economic sense, where a policy, often protectionism of some sort, is 'captured by special interests who would misuse it to pursue their own interests rather than let it be used for the national interest' (Bhagwati, 1988 available at http://www.econlib.org). The point here is not to claim that feminists misuse gender mainstreaming, but that they have definitional discretion over the concept.

gender expertise within feminist communities gives definitional discretion and authority surrounding the practice of gender mainstreaming to 'gender experts' who are also part of the political movement behind its introduction.[29] The 'capture' of the mainstreaming agenda by the women's movement can be used to better understand the policy. Many of the problems gender mainstreaming encounters when it enters mainstream policy-making are related to the fact that a feminist minority hold the knowledge base necessary to interpret and implement it to a degree where it can produce observable changes in policy priorities. In moving from concept to policy practice the indeterminacy of gender mainstreaming as a concept allows different interpretations by feminists and policy-makers. Many feminists see gender mainstreaming as a means to radically question established theories or practices. A glance at some efforts to 'mainstream gender' in political science demonstrates how gender mainstreaming can be interpreted to concern almost any area of human activity. The idea of mainstreaming political science is articulated in a discussion of 'mainstreaming gender research in the classroom' by Mazur and Appleton (1997; 194) who visualize how mainstream political science could be altered by making gender a key analytic category in political science:

> 'gender and politics research incorporates work that seeks to re-define political science theories, concepts and methods in terms of gender dynamics as well as interpretivist and empirical work – both quantitative and qualitative – that focuses on gender and sex-specific phenomena as explanatory variables or objects of analyses to strengthen existing political science theory'

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[29] For instance, Dr. Mieke Verloo has acted as consultant for the Council of Europe and the European Commission on gender mainstreaming. She is also professor of Women's Studies at the University of Nijmegen, Netherlands, has published academic books and articles on the topic and clearly writes from a feminist perspective.At http://www.kun.nl/cvv/medewerkers/verloo.html

Similar conceptualizations of gender mainstreaming, as an in-house critique of established practices, are held by feminist economists (Nelson, 1996), development managers (Goetz, 1997) and femocrats (McGauran, 2004).

In other circumstances, policy-makers implementing gender mainstreaming, for instance, an administrator charged with ensuring the gender is mainstreamed in political science syllabi may think that a particular undergraduate course is gender mainstreamed if women are mentioned in the course outline, or if there is one lecture on the issue of women, or if the lecturer/tutor happens to be a woman. Mazur and Appleton (1997) see the process of mainstreaming gender in political science as a more challenging long-term goal to produce substantive equality for women and feminist ideas, concepts and philosophies within the discipline. In other words, different actors will interpret gender mainstreaming with varying degrees of intensity or interest, yielding different results. Feminist academics seeking to 'mainstream gender research into the classroom' (Mazur and Appleton, 1997), have had substantive training on what constitutes gender inequality. They can articulate why it is important to have feminist critiques of the liberal state (McBride Stetson in Mazur and Appleton, 1997; 196), identify the repercussions of the exclusion of women from parliaments for representative democracies, or the predict relative possibilities of producing a feminist welfare state. Experts are not however, the only actors responsible for 'mainstreaming gender.' The Council of Europe identifies 'actors normally involved in policy-making' as the group responsible for the '(re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages of policy making processes'

(Council of Europe, 1998; 135) [30] are less likely to have such privileged theoretical or experiential knowledge of the relationship between gender and their particular policy area. This example serves to illustrate two things: 1) that gender mainstreaming's indeterminate definition can lead to a wide variety of interpretations, and; 2) that members of feminist communities, be they policy-making, academic, activist or professional have access to knowledge which leads to a more substantive and challenging conceptualisation of gender mainstreaming.

The question is how to reconcile the feminism inherent in 'gender mainstreaming' with its international presence, practical manifestation in national contexts and theoretical under development. These challenges can be addressed by reflecting on the divisions internal to feminism, explicitly identifiable as the body of knowledge and political movement that produced gender mainstreaming in the first instance. The connection between feminism as an internally divisive political movement/school of thought and problems encountered in the implementation of gender mainstreaming have not been recognised in the literature which has tended to discuss gender mainstreaming as if it emerged as fully-formed 'official' EU and UN policy on gender at Beijing (Beveridge et. al., 2000; 388). The initial excitement surrounding the potential of gender mainstreaming as a cure-all for the disappointments of liberal democratic legislative reform has resulted in a flurry of research into 'how do we do it?' Few have paused to establish the theoretical basis on

[30] The Council of Europe definition of gender mainstreaming states that: "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 actors normally involved in policy-making' (Council of Europe, 1998; 135).

which gender impact assessment tools would be based. The result has been an almost complete failure to construct anything resembling a coherent conceptual or interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming.

> 'There has been little attempt to develop a general theory of mainstreaming which transcends the diversity of state practice in order to provide a universal frame of reference, or set of criteria, by which mainstreaming may be understood and particular mainstreaming initiatives judged' (Beveridge, et. al., 2000; 388).

The outcome of the practice-heavy orientation of research into gender mainstreaming is consistently vague articulation of the goals of the mainstreaming agenda by the actors charged with its implementation, and resulting disappointment as its limitations become ever more apparent to both policy-makers and feminists.

> 'The difficulties with gender mainstreaming from an evaluation perspective are threefold: there is no clear objective, there is no data available and we have no methodological tools' (Author Interview, R21, September 2002; 3).

The indeterminacy of gender mainstreaming's definition leads to disappointment once it becomes policy because such vagueness allows for different expectations of the policy. For instance, some feminist activists may expect that 'gender mainstreaming' to mean the radical re-organisation of policies so as to produce equal numerical representation of women in parliaments, or guaranteed equal pay, or full market value remuneration for household work, or free, high quality state childcare. Evidently, when national government and policy-makers interpret gender mainstreaming as a tokenistic 'women's policy' which requires only an international conference on gender equality while holding

the Presidency of the European Union,[31] the establishment of a temporary 'Gender Equality Unit' with two temporary gender equality experts and a staff of five to implement gender mainstreaming across all government departments, the employment of one statistician to develop gender disaggregated data across a small selection of policy areas and a website on policy-making and gender mainstreaming, there is bound to be disappointment.

For this reason, feminists have been recognised as absolutely crucial players in the proliferation of gender mainstreaming as a mode of policy-making in the literature (True and Mintrom, 2001) and in practice (Carney, 2003). However, feminism has been criticized for failing to co-ordinate theoretical and practical aspects of the gender mainstreaming agenda:

> 'The failure of pure feminist research... to translate the results of research into practice means that many of those committed to integrating gender into their work at policy, programme or project levels still lack the necessary planning principles and methodological tools. This issue is critical: planners require simplified tools which allow them to feed the particular complexities of specific contexts into the planning process' (Moser, 1993; 5).

The problems identified for gender and development policy by Moser (1993) above, are replicated in its contemporary off-spring, gender mainstreaming. However, the research/practice gap is a problem for all the harbingers of gender mainstreaming, not just feminism. The gap between theory and practice can also be identified as the gap between

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[31] For instance, a conference on gender mainstreaming was held in Limerick, Ireland, May 2004.

expectations and the reality of gender mainstreaming. Nevertheless, there are advantages to having goals set by international standards, even if those standards are revealed as unachievable in the short-term at least. As such, the second significant site for developing gender mainstreaming is international organizations, who have facilitated the institutionalization of gender mainstreaming. This role is documented in the following section.

2.3 United Nations World Conferences on Women

The support of international organisations such as the UN is vital to provide legitimacy to groups operating outside mainstream political institutions (Karl, 1995; 32).

> 'State choices can also be influenced by international institutions, where institutions are defined as 'persistent and connected sets of rules (formal and informal) that prescribe behavioural roles, constrain activity and shape expectations' (Haas, 1998; 24).

For feminism, the UN has been an important moral support in establishing gender equality as a core principle of democracy in the Charter of the United Nations and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Galligan et. al., 2000 ; 11).

> 'International organisations provide forums in which people gather, often with the explicit agenda of rethinking what states should be doing' (Finnemore, 1996; 35).

Specifically, Timothy and Freeman (2000) identify the important role of UN world conferences in the development of international norms. The impetus for a world conference on a particular theme, be it gender (Mexico, Copenhagen, Beijing, New York), environment (Rio de Janeiro), human rights (Teheran, Vienna) or population (Cairo) comes from discussions amongst member-states and between local, global and national political communities. The preparation for world conferences requires that national governments engage with the relevant non-governmental political groups (Timothy and Freeman, 2000; 2). In the case of World Conferences on Women, governments engaged with non-governmental women's and feminist organisations prior to the conference.

> '...networking among women's organisations – and among women's organisations, governments and international organisations such as the UN – has provided the political momentum and societal pressure for meaningful institutional change at the domestic level' (True and Mintrom, 2001; 38).

Such engagement, combined with the common purpose of conference preparation and participation has contributed to the development of 'international feminism.' World conferences also foster the development and proliferation of international norms formulating language that will lead to consensus (Timothy and Freeman, 2001; 2).

> 'While United Nations conferences represent only the tip of the iceberg, the visible culmination of years of hard work and preparatory activities, they are landmarks in the work of putting women on the UN agenda' (Karl, 1995; 137).

There is little doubt that the central role conferred on NGOs by the UN has built the confidence and experience of women's organisations. The UN and the social movements

it fosters utilise the political space between nation-states to develop innovative strategies for the achievement of feminist goals.

> 'During the UN International Decade for Women (1975-85), the new breed of NGOs took an innovative network form in contrast to the hierarchical form of state bureaucracies' (True and Mintrom, 2001; 38).[32]

However, there are limitations to what can be achieved at the international level. The obvious limitations to world conferences are that the agreements arising from them are not legally binding. It is relatively easy for governments to hide behind bureaucracy in terms of reporting procedures, and conference agreements do not generally include concrete mechanisms for the implementation of policies. The lack of workable mechanisms, reduction of 'mainstreaming' to rhetoric at the national level, and the absence of binding legal status have all been identified as fatal problems for 'gender mainstreaming' (Woodward, 1999, Mossink, 2001). Nevertheless, in terms of critical[33] political movements like feminism, world conferences are particularly important players in providing a forum for evaluating issues and expanding the boundaries of discussion, if not for developing usable policy tools (Timothy and Freeman, 2000; 4). Feminist activists, operating within mainstream international organisations and institutions can be effective at national level. The relationship between international norms and institutions is well articulated by Cox (1980; 377 cited in Whitworth, 1997; 73)

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[32] The extent to which bureaucratic structures impede the development of gender mainstreaming is revealed in the case study. However, the focus of this thesis is on gender mainstreaming as a concept, and its development in practice, rather than the relationship between feminism and bureaucracy. As such, it is beyond the scope of this study to engage in a comprehensive analysis of the relative influence of bureaucratic politics as a variable determining the transformative impact of gender mainstreaming. However, in light of the findings from this study, such an analysis would be valuable in future research into gender mainstreaming.

[33] The term 'critical' is used here in the sense employed by bell hooks (2000; *xi*) '...initially feminist theory was the site for the critical interrogation and re-imagining of sexist gender roles.' By critical, hooks (2000) implies that feminist theory questions established structures and seeks to imagine a world that transcends sexist political structure.

> 'International institutions universalise the norms proper to a structure of world power, and that structure of power maintains itself through support of these institutions... But international institutions may also become vehicles for the articulation of a coherent counter-hegemonic set of values. In this way, they may become mediators between one world order and another.'

Whitworth (1997; 73) uses this analysis to demonstrate how international organisations can be used by activists as sites of political struggle against the status quo. Activities of transnational women's networks in the diffusion of international gender norms (i.e. 'gender mainstreaming') is evidence of such struggle. For instance, the gender mainstreaming approach became central to the Platform for Action launched at Beijing because by the early 1990s because women working in international development agencies moved from 'integrating women' to 'mainstreaming gender' in development projects seeing themselves as

> 'catalysts for advancing gender awareness in development cooperation, both within their own organizations and among their development partners' (Beall, 1998; 516).

Similar work on the conceptual development of gender mainstreaming can be traced to the work of feminist scholars working in International Relations theory and practice. Problems now apparent and emanating from the uneven conceptualisation of gender mainstreaming can be explicated with reference to how the idea emanated from international conferences held during the International Decade for Women (1975-1985). An examination of this process, and how it is interpreted by feminist scholars of

international institutions and organisations provides some explanation of why the indeterminacy of gender mainstreaming may prevail in current definitions of the concept.

Feminists developed a critique of International Relations around the themes of Peace, Development and re-drawing the boundaries of what constitutes 'International Relations'(Sylvester, 1991; 1). These premises reflect the theme for the UN International Decade for Women (1975-1985): 'Equality, Development and Peace.' This theme is an amalgamation of ideas from women activists and conference participants from all over the world. What began as conflicting priorities at the 1975 conference developed into a consensus between women from North and South (Jahan, 1995; 7). It is conceptualised in the following terms:

> '...to introduce and weave into the social fabric women's concept of equality, their choices between alternative development strategies and their approach to peace, in accordance with their aspirations, interests and talents.'[34]

In practice, the themes of the conferences did not 'weave' into either mainstream or intra-feminist goals as smoothly as the UN document anticipated. Politically marginalised groups are often forced to articulate every need and political demand in one unified voice and at one point in time (Peterson, 1992; 191-2). This is illustrated by feminist efforts to compact the myriad of goals, dreams, needs and identities of women from all over the world into a single coherent conference theme. The themes 'Equality, Development and Peace' were the collaborative efforts of conference delegates from hugely diverse political

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[34] Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development, Peace at http://gopher.undp.org/00/women/nfls.en

regimes and ideologies whose marginal status forced them to operate as one over-general category of 'women.' Equality was a priority of western feminists from liberal democratic states. Peace reflected the concerns of women in the Soviet bloc and 'Development' was the priority of women from the Third World (Jahan, 1995; 7). The diverse political perspectives of the women who gathered to discuss gender issues at Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995) is reflected in the conference agreements that spawned gender mainstreaming. Diverse political perspectives are still evident in varying regional (EU) (Booth and Bennett, 2002) and national interpretations of 'gender mainstreaming' at the level of practice. However, some conceptualisations of gender mainstreaming can be seen as robust. For instance, Booth and Bennett (2002) recognise how the European Commission has used experimental development of gender mainstreaming in Sweden to build a conceptualisation of gender mainstreaming which has been fed into general EU policy (Booth and Bennett, 2002; 431) and produced noteworthy outcomes:

> 'Most significantly, the Treaty of Amsterdam (1998) reinforced the use of positive action programmes such as the Community Action programmes by underpinning them with a commitment to mainstreaming equal opportunities throughout all the Union's activities'

Given the fact that 'gender mainstreaming' is the contemporary off-spring of development policy, it is not surprising that problems currently being encountered by those implementing gender mainstreaming, (and by those struggling to come to terms with it as feminist researchers) have been previously addressed in earlier manifestations as 'gender and development' policy. Conversely, current problems for gender mainstreaming could be the result of a failure to clarify conceptual issues in relation to WID and GAD policy.

2.4 From WID to GAD: the Development of Gender Mainstreaming

A number of developments during the UN International Decade for Women and Development (1985-1995), led to the development of 'gender mainstreaming' as a cross-sectoral goal for the achievement of gender equality (von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002: 67). Concepts and methodologies now identified with the mainstreaming project evolved within development policy between 1985-1995. These developments can be traced in the evolution of 'Women in Development'[35] into 'Gender and Development' policy (Jahan, 1995; 21). WID refers to 'Women in Development' an essentially liberal-reformist feminist strategy that worked on the basis that adding women to the development process would ensure their needs were met. The WID approach is typified in paragraph 114 of the UN Report on the Decade (1986; 24).

> 'The incorporation of women's issues in all areas and sectors and at the local, national regional and international levels should be institutionalised. To this end, appropriate machinery should be established or strengthened, and further legislative action taken.'

Women in Development (WID) policies were initially greeted with levels of enthusiasm comparable with the rush to adopt mainstreaming 20 years later. Initially, WID was the

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[35] For a detailed account of why 'Women and Development' programmes developed in the first place, see von Braunmühl, C. (2002) in Braig, M. and Wölte, S. (eds.) *Common Ground or Mutual Exclusion: Women's Movements and International Relations* London: Zed.

brainchild of a group of feminist development professionals who could be identified as an epistemic community motivated by the work of Ester Boserup and other 'new' anthropologists such as Tinker (1982) (Moser, 1993; 2). The phrase WID became popular in the 1970s when the term was adopted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) who, according to Moser (1993), identified women as 'an untapped resource who can provide an economic contribution to development' (Moser, 1993; 2).[36]

> 'The prospect of steering women from the margin to the mainstream was as exciting to some would be developers as to female recipients of such policies and programmes. 'Women in Development' became the Decade's overnight catchphrase' (Mair, 1986 quoted in Jahan, 1995; 19).

Feminist agitation during the UN Decade for Women and Development precipitated the development of a more sophisticated understanding of the multiple priorities of women, which necessarily intersect established policy areas.

> 'In the post-Nairobi decade, agencies increasingly embraced the approaches advocated by the women's movement' (Jahan, 1995; 21).

This is reflected in the UN Report on the Decade for Women (1986), which recognised the need for a concurrent conceptual development (a theory of WID). The Report articulated ambitious aims for reshaping the way knowledge is constructed in global feminist politics.

> 'The Decade has witnessed the rise of centres and programmes of women's studies in response to social forces and to the need for developing a new scholarship and a

[36] A similar attitude is reflected in current references to gender mainstreaming providing a means of supplying 'women returners' to deal with labour supply shortages in the Republic of Ireland (Author Interview, R7, September 2002).

body of knowledge on women's studies from the perspective of women' (UN, 1986; 33).

Despite these ambitions, the idea of gender as a distinct analytical category[37] allowing for the expression of male and female roles, interests and identities is stark in its absence from this 1986 UN Report. There is some evidence of growing disillusionment with the WID approach to development policy in the 1986 UN Report on the International Decade for Women, reflecting a concern with knowledge deficiencies inhibiting change:

> 'Insufficient awareness and understanding of the complex and multifaceted relationships between development and the advancement of women have continued to make policy, programme and project formulation difficult' (UN, 1986; 22).

Disillusionment with WID, led to the development of GAD, which recognized the need to consider the effects of gender identities for both men and women in the development process. This shift led to the development of new mechanisms to achieve policy goals.

> '...many agencies also shifted their methodological approaches from 'women in development' (WID) to 'gender and development' (GAD), the former implying a consideration of women's roles and the latter paying attention to the socially constructed roles of both women and men' (Jahan, 1995; 21).

The shift from a focus on women to a focus on gender was an extremely significant step in terms of moving beyond liberal-reformist strategies in favour of more substantive

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[37] '...distinct analytical category' refers to the role of "gender" as a concept for the articulation of differences in access to power, resources and institutions between men and women based on socially ascribed gender identities. Though, even the term 'gender' is itself more frequently criticised for becoming a universal category (Bordo, 1990: 135 quoted in Bangura, 1997; 9) for women which ignores race, class and other socially constructed hierarchies.

outcomes. True and Mintrom (2001; 33) recognise this move as the key reason why gender mainstreaming can now be identified as potentially radical:

> 'Gender mainstreaming, therefore, is conceived not as a goal in itself, nor merely as a *liberal* policy to include women. Rather, it is a more *radical* strategy for achieving gender equality that involves traditional state efforts to address gender imbalances by developing specific policies for women. Most importantly, though, mainstreaming is the on-going process by which public policies that are known to have a large impact on society, from macroeconomic to housing policy, are devised by taking into account the specific interests and values of men and women.'

However, the re-articulation of women's concerns as gender concerns left feminist goals open to greater levels of interpretation, complicating the translation of theory into practical goals and objectives. Nevertheless, these developments provided the foundations on which the theory and practice of 'gender mainstreaming' was built and extrapolated on a global scale.

> '... the term (mainstreaming) was in general use in UNIFEM during the five years immediately following the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985' (Corner, 1999; 2).

Many of the problems identified during the WID/GAD era, particularly definition and clarification of key concepts, were not resolved before the launch of gender mainstreaming. As a result, 'gender mainstreaming' matured on an *ad hoc* basis.

> 'Mainstreaming has gained its meaning through usage and consensus rather than through formal definition. Efforts to provide a formal definition came only after the term had long been in use' (Corner, 1999; 2).

The result is that many of the questions asked by analysts of development policy during the Decade are echoed in contemporary literature on 'gender mainstreaming.' For instance, Jahan's (1995) asks of Women in Development:

> 'Did the donors and their partner governments clearly establish a set of objectives when they initiated their WID policies and actions? How should policies be measured: by efforts or by results? What lessons can be drawn from the experiences of the last two decades?' (Jahan, 1995; 19, 124, 126).

These questions were not addressed by any of the political actors responsible for the launch of gender mainstreaming at Beijing in 1995 (the UN, women's movements or national governments). The same questions are now being asked of 'gender mainstreaming' at national level. One policy-maker describes colleagues struggle to operationalise gender mainstreaming:

> 'The problems we came across were that people said 'What do you want us to do?' It needs to be more prescriptive. 'How would you design it now?' (Author Interview; R12, August, 2002; 3).

Jahan's (1995) study highlights the significance of examining gender mainstreaming as a relational process which is the responsibility of a number of 'partner' organisations and institutions.[38] Her (1995) analysis resonates with the Irish case, where responsibility for coordinating the implementation of gender mainstreaming lies with the Gender Equality

[38] Jahan, R. (1995) The Elusive Agenda: mainstreaming women in development New York: Zed.

Unit at the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, identified as 'technical assistance'[39] within the bureaucracy. These policy initiators have to cope with the resistance of their bureaucratic colleagues and the simultaneous expression of disappointment at their efforts on the part of NGOs:

> 'That was always our concern about gender mainstreaming; that it would be used to replace positive action' (Author Interview, R22, September 2002; 3).

In actuality, mainstreaming is designed for cooperation between NGOs, the government and bureaucracy, working as a team, with key goals and an overall strategy in mind.[40] Feminist scholars have played a particularly important role in 'building the picture' of gender inequities with the development of a bank of gender disaggregated data. In the Republic of Ireland, Barry's (2000) work into the status of gender in relation to public statistics revealed that gender disaggregated statistics were not gathered because only male models of public engagement, political and social activity were deemed relevant by data collectors.[41] Indeed, Barry's (2000) work is an excellent example of how the application of a feminist cognitive framework reveals omissions which amount to uneven representation within an ostensibly 'fair' and unbiased policy-making system.

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[39] 'I knew that people didn't know how to do gender mainstreaming, so then I thought that if we applied for technical assistance funding then we were able to help people in other departments to gender-proof their plans and to train people' (Author Interview, R2, June, 2002).

[40] Indeed, specific roles are identified for each of these groups in the Platform for Action (United Nations, 1996). Feminist scholars have played a particularly important role in 'building the picture' of gender inequities with the development of a bank of gender disaggregated data. (For instance, Barry, 2000).

[41] Even still the Central Statistics Office tends to concentrate on gathering statistics on participation rates in formal sectors of the economy and politics. There is little reliable and comparable data on the activities of charitable organisations, those providing care for young and old in the home, or cause-centred political groups (eg. Women in the Home, NEART and other groups representing those in the home).

The complexity of institutionalising gender is also recognised by del Rosario (1995; 109) in her analysis of mainstreaming gender concerns in development policy in the Philippines.

> '...it has been shown that state structures are clearly not monolithic – within them are individuals with different perspectives on and interest in development. They therefore respond to WID differently, according to the contexts and their interests at stake' (del Rosario, 1995; 109).

Apart from practical outputs, the development of 'international gender norms' has resulted in networks of feminist scholarship successfully posing a credible challenge to mainstream conceptions of knowledge of international politics (Sylvester, 1991; 1). The 1986 UN hope that the rise of knowledge about gender and women's studies would

> 'reformulate the current models influencing the constitution of knowledge and sustaining a value system that reinforces inequality' (UN, 1986; 33)

may be realised, albeit at a rather slower pace than first hoped. For instance, much of the scholarship arising from the launch of gender mainstreaming at Beijing has centred on debates about the definition and interpretation of gender mainstreaming, its potential and its limitations. Interpretations and definitions of gender mainstreaming are so diverse that lack of consistent definition of the concept is becoming a point of contention itself (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000). The remainder of the Chapter outlines these debates in some detail.

2.5 Definitions and Interpretations of Gender Mainstreaming

Conceptual implications of gender mainstreaming as a means of achieving gender equality are often taken for granted rather than explored. This thesis recognises the under-conceptualisation of gender mainstreaming as a key challenge to its manifestation in practice. The lack of a clearly defined and agreed definition of gender mainstreaming makes it difficult for femocrats to argue with permanent bureaucrats that gender mainstreaming has or has not been successfully implemented. For instance, how can a femocrat argue that a housing policy is not genuinely mainstreamed unless there is some agreement as to what a 'mainstreamed' housing policy might entail. Would it ensure that women own half of all houses, or does it merely suggest that homelessness be recognised as a particular risk for unmarried or separated men?

Disagreement as to the 'true' meaning of gender mainstreaming means has led to arbitrary usage of the concept in national and supranational policy-making institutions is common. This confusion stems from the lack of agreement on the meaning of concepts constituent to gender mainstreaming such as "gender" and "equality". Debates about desirable conceptions of equality have raged amongst feminist communities for some time.

> 'Anyone involved in the pursuit of equality has to be aware of the shades of meaning attached to this term' (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 17).

If there is little consensus as to the meaning of the ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming, it is hardly surprising that there is disagreement as to the meaning of the term itself.

> 'Arguments over the 'correct' meaning of equality can divert attention away from what in any given situation is the best method of promoting equality between the sexes' (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 17).

The issue of definition has become central to debates on gender mainstreaming in the literature.

> 'There has been and will be a lot of confusion about what exactly 'gender mainstreaming' is, whether it is a good thing or not, how it should be understood and defined: as a state of mind, a new approach to promoting gender equality, a policy frame, or even an instrument' (Mossink, 2001; 1).

This section of the Chapter discusses definitions of gender mainstreaming proposed by the political institutions and actors identified as central to the mainstreaming process. As such, UN, and EU definitions of gender mainstreaming are discussed, as are interpretations of these 'official' definitions by policy-makers, feminists and government at the national level. The contribution of scholars of gender mainstreaming in addressing the conceptual ambiguity of gender mainstreaming is evaluated.

International Definitions

It is arguable that gender mainstreaming's origins in a movement as diverse as feminism, and its attractiveness to a diversity of organisations has resulted in it developing multiple identities. Woodward (2001; 6-8) documents *seven different* 'official' definitions of 'gender mainstreaming' currently in use by international institutions implementing a 'mainstreaming' approach. Definitions gathered include those devised by the Economic

and Social Council of the United Nations; the Nordic Council of Ministers; the European Parliament; the International Labour Organisation; the European Commission and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. The lack of agreed definition has resulted in gender mainstreaming being variously described as 'a tool, sometimes a process or method, and sometimes as a strategy' (McKay and Bilton, 2000; 2). However, there is some agreement that there is serious conceptual ambiguity surrounding 'gender mainstreaming.' The OECD DAC Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality (1998; 24) states that a clear set of objectives was never established, the result is that the meaning of gender mainstreaming is continually contested:

> 'Despite an increasing use of the term mainstreaming, there is still confusion about what it means and organizations use the word in different ways. Some organizations are resisting the use of the term, as they find it confusing and difficult to translate into other languages.'

The most widely quoted definition of gender mainstreaming was stated at the beginning of the the thesis. It was used to launch the policy at the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing in 1995:

> 'governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively' (United Nations, 1996; 11).

Meanwhile, the European Commission defines 'gender mainstreaming' as:

'Mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving gender equality by actively and openly taking into account at the planning stage their possible effects on the respective situations of men and women (the gender perspective).'[42]

A definition offered by the Council of Europe is also widely quoted:

'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 actors normally involved in policy-making' (Council of Europe, 1998; 135).

Each of the above definitions puts a slightly different emphasis on certain aspects of the mainstreaming process. The Council of Europe emphasises that ordinary policy-makers must implement the policy. The European Commission clearly identifies the benefits of adopting a gender perspective for men, while the official UN definition has a degree of vagueness that facilitated the subtly different interpretations by European institutions quoted.

So, it is difficult to identify a single definition of gender mainstreaming, though it seems that the European Union may have taken some measures to clarify it. This thesis argues that the main obstacle to providing a precise definition of gender mainstreaming is the multiple actors involved in its development and implementation. Feminists and non-

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[42] Quoted in Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mulally and Smith (1999) *Gender Proofing and the European Structural Funds;* 9.

feminists, international organisations and national governments all have different interests which they wish to promote in the name of gender mainstreaming.

> 'I think some of the problem is that we have shared and implied values and assumptions that are unstated and only come to light when something like 'gender mainstreaming' is presented to a policy-maker who knows nothing about gender' (Author Interview; R16, August, 2002; 3).

Feminist organisations at national and international levels conspire to introduce and implement gender mainstreaming. Policy-makers at national and EU level also promote the policy. All four groups are involved in the adoption and implementation of the policy but with varying degrees of interest and expertise. International feminism wanted to produce something useful from the UN Decade for Women; national women's movements are very divided about gender mainstreaming but happy that there is a gender policy in mainstream institutions; national policy-makers (and governments) want to do something about equality because it is a 'hot international issue,' but don't have any ideas of their own and so opt to adopt gender mainstreaming; the EU is building a profile for equality and, not wanting to be usurped by the UN, it jumps on the bandwagon of what emerged from Beijing. All of these groups promote gender mainstreaming, though it is clear that they all have different priorities – whether what they are all doing separately amounts to gender mainstreaming is debatable given the vagueness surrounding the policy.

While there is no agreement, one can speculate as to what gender mainstreaming might imply for the multiple actors involved in its conceptualisation. For instance, national governments may see gender mainstreaming as an opportunity to introduce a policy for

women that 'fits' with rational bureaucratic policy-making structures, economic growth and other core governmental aims. The EU may see gender mainstreaming as an opportunity to institutionalise gender equality across member states regardless of political culture and/or previous track record on the status of women at the national level. Even within feminism there are disagreements. Liberal feminists may see gender mainstreaming as an opportunity to achieve full and equal participation of women in established structures (i.e. parliamentary representation/labour force participation). Radical feminists, who generally reject gender mainstreaming, see it as an attempt by mainstream governments and organisations to replace bolder initiatives like positive action for women with a performance related principle of 'gender' where men and women are both seen as possible beneficiaries of policy change.

Whatever the problems arising from multiple definitions of gender mainstreaming are, there is little doubt that the indeterminacy of the concept derive from the conditions under which gender mainstreaming emerged. While there were wide disparities of opinion between feminists (Goetz, 1997; Ward, 1999) from North and South at Beijing, a shared set of core beliefs between diverse feminisms led to common political objectives (Henley and Kramarae, 1991; 40), sufficient to allow the launch of gender mainstreaming as a means of legitimizing and institutionalizing feminist concerns in mainstream policy-making. However, difficulties arose when gender mainstreaming left the 'safety of the margins' (hooks, 1996; 48) and entered mainstream policy-making, thereby making the transition from metaphor or feminist principle to a tool for political decision-making and policy-making. Confusion as to the meaning is rooted in the fact that concepts and ideas,

and language and vocabulary to communicate these ideas do not exist beyond feminism. Even within feminism,

> 'given the limitations of our language, we find it difficult to even talk about gender – masculinity and femininity - without essentialising' (DeFrancisco, 1997; 38).

Currently, the only vocabulary available to deal with gender mainstreaming from a mainstream perspective sounds more like feminist ideal than policy language.[43] The question for those examining the translation of global feminism into mainstream policy-making (via gender mainstreaming) is whether it can be articulated in mainstream theory and practice. As such, if gender mainstreaming is to become a tool capable of transforming policy from a gender blind to more gender equal political activity, then feminist understandings of what gender mainstreaming might imply, if radically conceived, are central to the whole process. Returning to the statement about radical feminists rejection of the concept of gender mainstreaming made earlier. A more progressive radical feminist interpretation of gender mainstreaming is that women should benefit from policy to the degree where established social and cultural norms regarding, say, the sexual division of labour, or the remuneration of work outside the home, are reversed. Under this regime, gender mainstreamed policy would reward caring more than productive work, perhaps, paying parents for taking care of their children in the home, rather than dealing with childcare as a private, family responsibility. The point of this example is to illustrate that there is no limit to what gender mainstreaming could be. In large part, this is due to the fact that gender mainstreaming is ill-defined. A full length dissertation could be dedicated to analysing possible alternative conceptualisations of

[43] For a fuller discussion of the issue of language and communication with regard to gender mainstreaming see: Carney, G. (2003) 'Communicating or Just Talking? Gender Mainstreaming and the Politics of Global Feminism *Women and Language Special Issue* Spring 2003.

gender mainstreaming. However, as the purposes of this thesis is to gain some insight from an in-depth analysis of a particular case of gender mainstreaming, I have constructed the following definition of gender mainstreaming. This definition is what is implied when the term gender mainstreaming is used throughout the dissertation:

> 'Gender mainstreaming' means that government policies should not create new structures of inequality nor reproduce existing inequalities between women and men based on gender roles, norms and identities that ascribe differential status to individuals on the basis of their biological sex.[44]

National Interpretations

A problem arising from the multiple definitions of gender mainstreaming is that it projects a diversity of meanings to different groups implicated in the implementation process.[45] It is at this point that multiple definitions of gender mainstreaming lead to multiple interpretations as a policy, an international gender norm or as a concept (Woodward, 2001; 6). This point illustrates the need to develop some mechanism that allows for a meaningful analysis of the impact of mainstreaming for the multitude of ways that it can be interpreted. Multiple interpretations arise from the fact that 'gender mainstreaming' must speak to a variety of audiences. The diversity between the target groups is obvious in the Irish case. In the Republic of Ireland gender mainstreaming must be communicated to NGOs with a sophisticated understanding of 'gender,' such as the National Women's

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[44] The definition constructed here is constructed on the feminist differentiation of 'sex' vs. 'gender'.

[45] For instance, at a national meeting of NGOs about the New York (2000) Beijing + 5 conference, the author observed some NGO representatives express the opinion that 'gender mainstreaming' represented an attempt by the women's movement to force everyone, male and female to adopt 'androgenous' or 'homosexual' gender identity.

Council of Ireland (NWCI).[46] Likewise, NGOs with a crude understanding of these issues[47] are also implicated in the mainstreaming process. Also, policy-makers responsible for implementing the policy with (and/or without) a sophisticated understanding of the implications and even the vocabulary, of gender mainstreaming; and finally policy beneficiaries, are all implicated in the 'mainstreaming' agenda (Galligan et. al., 2000; 105-6).

As long as there are multiple definitions of gender mainstreaming, multiple interpretations will result. As such, an interpretative framework must be established, which would at least allow for coherent communication between groups implicated in the mainstreaming process. Perhaps the evident confusion resulted because gender mainstreaming revealed itself as infinitely more popular amongst governments, international organisations and supranational institutions than envisaged by those feminists who came together at World Conferences (1975-1995). Certainly, the practice of gender mainstreaming has far out-run the conceptual base on which it was constructed. This is reflected in a discussion of the goals and limitations of gender mainstreaming.

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[46] The National Women's Council of Ireland have influenced the development of a women's rights framework in the Republic of Ireland, conceptually and in practice. For instance, the Council submitted an articulate and clearly feminist alternative report on the progress of the Republic of Ireland as regards the Beijing Platform for Action to government delegates attending the Beijing +5 meeting in New York, 2000. See National Women's Council of Ireland (2000) *Promises Made Promises Broken: Beijing +5 Alternative Report for Ireland* at: http://www.nwci.ie/

[47] This group would include women's organisations such as Women in the Home who were consulted regarding the National Plan for Women (2002). These groups support traditional gendered divisions of labour. See Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (2002) *Aspirations for Women collected in the course of the consultation process on the National Plan for Women* Dublin: Stationery Office.

2.6 The goals of gender mainstreaming

The definitions and interpretations of gender mainstreaming identified in the previous section are used to construct a number of primary goals and objectives of the mainstreaming project. These goals are then assessed in terms of the official literature on gender mainstreaming in order to determine the extent to which international and national actors pertaining to the study (the UN, the EU, the Irish government and the Irish women's movement) agree on the primary goals of gender mainstreaming. This is significant as the *Platform for Action* identifies explicit roles for national governments, civil society and the United Nations in the mainstreaming process (United Nations, 1996; 2). If the fundamental task of the mainstreaming project is to provide unprecedented co-ordinated analysis of the impact of policies on men and women, then, a lack of agreement on the primary goals of the project amounts to a serious impediment to the successful implementation of the policy. The section concludes that the limitations of gender mainstreaming as a comprehensive programme for the eradication of gender bias across government policy programmes is linked to the lack of co-ordination and agreement amongst actors implicated in the process.

The result is a situation where gender mainstreaming operates as an ill-conceived and marginalised process, rather than the co-ordinated strategy initially conceived. These fundamental limitations are linked to theoretical under-development of the process in the concluding section.

The discussion of the goals of gender mainstreaming is divided into two distinct categories, instrumental and aspirational. Instrumental goals of gender mainstreaming are actions or processes necessary in order for gender mainstreaming to be achieved. For instance, the employment of femocrats by the state is the first step in institutionalising gender mainstreaming as it provides permanent bureaucrats with internal consultants and experts who can help them to identify the changes that need to be made in their policies in order for them to produce more gender equal outcomes. Conversely, aspirational goals are those which may not be immediately attainable, or even quantifiable (such as the aim that gender should be a central consideration in making policy), but are necessary in order for the political purpose of gender mainstreaming to remain clear. The distinction drawn between instrumental and aspirational goals of gender mainstreaming is used to build the interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming identified in Chapter 1 as one of the primary contributions of the thesis. The main value of adopting this distinction is that it allows one to identify the goals that have been with it since conception, and the goals that have emerged, in hindsight, as necessary prerequisites to the initial goals. From our earlier discussion of the evolution of gender mainstreaming through WID and GAD policy, it seems clear that gender mainstreaming was essentially launched as an aspiration without any credible instruments for implementation. The consequences were high levels of confusion and retarded development of the conceptual basis necessary to achieve the instrumental goals of gender mainstreaming, identified for the purposes of this research as:

(1) Gender mainstreaming is a mechanism for government to adopt ideas from the women's movement in an area where traditional legislative approaches have been disappointing (Mazey, 2000; 341-2)

(2) Gender mainstreaming represents a strategic approach to what is described in policy-making terms as a 'cross-cutting issue' (Boyle, 1999) or 'horizontal issue' (Author Interview, R6, July 2002).

(3) Gender mainstreaming is a concrete plan of action to achieve specific goals regarding the reduction of gender inequality in society (http://www.ndpgenderequality.ie).

All of the above may be legitimate aims of the gender mainstreaming project. The problem is that they are not mutually exclusive. These goals could are derived from the interpretations of multiple actors of gender mainstreaming, namely, the United Nations, European Union, Council of Europe, individual states and other international organisations and policy-making bodies. Depending on one's interpretation of gender mainstreaming there are an infinite number of possible goals. However, all goals of gender mainstreaming have one prerequisite in common. The prerequisite for the achievement of all the primary and secondary, aspirational and instrumental goals of gender mainstreaming is knowledge of gender and gender issues. Gender knowledge, its marginalisation and re-evaluation through the popularity of gender mainstreaming provides a backdrop to all of the arguments surrounding feminism made in this thesis. As such, this thesis identifies the primary goal of gender mainstreaming, which may also be interpreted as an opportunity for feminism:

(4) Gender mainstreaming represents a means to legitimately design and undertake an internal, feminist critique of policy-making in theory and practice.

This primary goal articulates the radical potential of gender mainstreaming vaguely identified by scholars of the topic.

Gender knowledge, integral to spreading mainstreaming norms, begins with basic feminist concepts such as gender. Gender is the central concept of 'gender mainstreaming,' and one of the core tasks of the 'mainstreaming' project is to disseminate it's meaning. Specifically, the communication of knowledge about gender is the means by which policies can be evaluated for their gender impact. As such, gender knowledge acts as an important link between the aspirational and instrumental goals of gender mainstreaming. If one cannot understand the aspirations in gender mainstreaming how can one develop instruments for the achievement of these goals? Likewise, in order to address the research question 'What is the transformative capacity of gender mainstreaming as a policy tool in the Irish case?' one must first answer 'What is gender mainstreaming?' Arguments about knowledge, feminism and the articulation and communication of feminist knowledge about gender via gender mainstreaming form the theoretical basis on which the interpretative framework for mainstreaming identified in this thesis is built. Essentially, the argument identifies language development and the use of language by dominant groups as an exclusionary tactic.[48] The following section of the Chapter identifies how the absence of knowledge about gender amongst the communities responsible for achieving

[48] Feminists who are concerned with language as a source of social construction/exclusion have identified this problem '...language itself does not guarantee communication...' (Cameron, 1985; 5).

the goals of gender mainstreaming is manifest in the limitations of gender mainstreaming being more easily identified than its goals.

2.7 The limitations of gender mainstreaming

Why do the limitations of gender mainstreaming often appear more easily recognisable than its goals? This is primarily due to the fact that having developed as a somewhat haphazard practice without a coherent theoretical base, the policy has generally been envisaged at its maximum but implemented at a minimal level. For instance, the idea of gender mainstreaming may be interpreted as a unique opportunity for feminists to enter mainstream bureaucracies, and, like Helen of Troy, appear to be something familiar but later emerge as an outsider within, providing valid and institutionally legitimated justifications for re-structuring policies so as to produce more women in high office, a less macho mode of economic organisation, a move away from the breadwinner/homemaker sexual division of labour or any other number of feminist alternatives to mainstream cultural, political and social activities. However, rather opposite appears to be taking place in those incidences of gender mainstreaming that have so far been analysed. Lack of workable mechanisms, the reduction of 'mainstreaming' to 'box-ticking' at the national level (Mossink, 2001; 9), and the absence of binding legal status have all been identified as serious limitations for 'gender mainstreaming' in the literature (Pollack and Hafner-Burton, 2000; 437).

Fears are expressed that gender mainstreaming seemed to use too much jargon, which was often viewed as a smokescreen for a policy that would essentially pay lip service to gender equality. Other limitations of the policy are linked to these suspicions. What does 'gender mainstreaming' actually involve in terms of everyday policy-making? Why is gender mainstreaming preferable to positive action or other measures designed to benefit women exclusively? At what stage should gender mainstreaming replace positive action measures?

Almost all of the limitations and problems identified for gender mainstreaming in the literature relate to ambiguities surrounding the precise goals of gender mainstreaming. Lack of clarity as to the long and short-term objectives of gender mainstreaming, and indeed what precisely is implied in terms of policy-making activity from the introduction of gender mainstreaming severely limit the potential of the policy. The problems identified in the literature, referred to above – lack of workable mechanisms, the paring down of the policy at the national level and the fact that gender mainstreaming is not binding to the same extent as national legislation can all be traced to the fact that the policy launched at Beijing and adopted by the EU, 189 national governments and other international organisations was never precisely articulated. UN and EU documents provided to policy-makers did not include clear actions that need to be taken in order to bring about gender equality. Rather, governments were expected to interpret gender mainstreaming for themselves. In most cases, governments employed femocrats to undertake the task of translating the broad aspirations of 'gender mainstreaming' the concept, into concrete and quantifiable indicators or progress or mechanisms for achieving

gender equality. Without a clear conception of the goals of gender mainstreaming, it is impossible to develop effective policy instruments, which are necessary to maximise the potential of gender mainstreaming at the national level (Mossink, 2001; 1).

So, gender mainstreaming is a highly ambitious concept with limited means to transform itself into workable policy (Mazey, 2000). Perhaps the greatest weakness of gender mainstreaming is that neither its potential nor its limitations have been accurately stated. The idea of mainstreaming, as conceived at Beijing is essentially aspirational. It was devised by extremely diverse women's groups, who used the experience of feminist lobbying and development policy-making to devise a policy that would be popular amongst governments, but would also maximize the achievement of feminist goals, namely to increase levels of gender equality through formal means. Most importantly, prior to Beijing, interest in and, therefore, knowledge of gender issues was limited to those working in various strands of feminism. Scholars of women's studies, who have for generations examined the masculine roots of liberal political philosophy (Pateman, 1991; Phillips, 1997), activists who have worked in women's organizations providing vital shelter for battered women and feminist trade unionists attuned to the inadequacies of 'free market' in providing affordable alternatives to unpaid labour in the home posess the knowledge and experience which allows them to make gender mainstreaming become a meaningful exercise. For all of these reasons, the process of transforming gender mainstreaming from aspiration to effective policy is infinitely more complex than loose definitions of the policy suggest. The policy seems to continually disappoint because it was launched as a standard for gender equality that had no practical means of being

realized. In short, there is a large gap between gender mainstreaming in theory and gender mainstreaming in practice.

> 'there's a huge gap between theory and practice... theory is full of best practice and the ideal and I just don't even read these best practice manuals that come in because they're just a waste of time' (Author Interview, February 2003; 12).

The concluding section of the Chapter discusses the gap between the theory and the practice of gender mainstreaming identified above. Specifically, it recognizes that theoretical developments have stagnated since the aspiration to mainstream gender began its global proliferation in 1995. This final section also summarises the main arguments of the Chapter, linking them together as ideas central to developing an interpretative framework for gender mainstreaming.

2.8 Conclusion: developing theory to inform practice

It is arguable that theories are particular ways of recording, generalising or interpreting events. However, over time this process leads to events being 'constructed' in certain terms. Different perspectives will put distinct emphasis on various aspects of events. Often, decisions on whether or not to record an event depend on its relevance to the basic assumptions of that theoretical perspective. Many of the issues that relate to gender and are discussed as such are seen as 'non-issues' beyond the confines of feminist thought and

the feminist political movement.[49] The result is that ideas like 'gender mainstreaming' originate in terms that are alternate to the mainstream. The problems inherent with articulating marginal interests in mainstream terms are identified in the confusion surrounding the meaning of gender mainstreaming. It is defined outside the legitimated political system and as such feminist advocates of gender mainstreaming are involved in a political struggle to integrate their theoretical ideas into mainstream practice.

> 'Women have had to struggle not only against political policies, structures, and arrangements but against definitions of politics and modes of political explanation as well' (Elshtain, 1997; 26).

It is arguable that the marginal status of feminist theory is followed by marginal status in its practical manifestation as the policy of 'gender mainstreaming.' Indeed, the key to constructing an interpretative framework of 'gender mainstreaming' lies in understanding the relationship between feminist theory and practice.

A feminist analysis operates on two levels simultaneously. Firstly, it is by definition a critique of the hegemonic perspective. Secondly, it must understand the dominant perspective and still translate its own message, using language and terminology that the mainstream understands. The mainstream, being dominant, does not need to understand and develop concepts that represent the central concerns of feminism.[50] Nevertheless, the

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[49] For instance, failure to record statistics of unpaid labour privileges the interests of those engaged in paid labour, as these statistics are then used to inform policy practice in the Republic of Ireland. A whole section of the economy containing activities mostly performed by women, the private sphere, is excluded. This is rather short-sighted if one considers that increases in the cost of living over the past 30 years could plausibly be linked to increased female labour force participation rates in that childcare, ready-made meals and laundry services are expensive commodities when provided by the free market. These activities were previously conducted at no extra cost to the economy, by women, in the home.

[50] This relates to the earlier point made concerning the inability of subjugated groups to express their interests. See Browning Cole (1993; 90) for a discussion of feminist stand-point epistemology.

dominated group must still offer an alternative to the *status quo*, which is convincing enough to prompt change. As such, the widespread introduction of 'gender mainstreaming' across the globe appears to be evidence of the infiltration of feminist ideas and practices into mainstream policy-making apparatus (Baden and Goetz, 1997). The real challenge for feminists is to translate their emancipatory ideals into reality.

> 'However, precisely how mainstreaming is to be achieved is far from clear' (Mazey, 2000; 342).

Gender mainstreaming represents a kind of coming of age for feminism, essentially through the evolution of marginal, feminist ideas, (such as the idea that gender is a socially constructed category which ascribes differential status to individuals on the basis of biological sex), into policies designed to re-align gender-power relations. Having struggled to define categories that reflect a female perspective of power relations using the dominant discourse, feminism has progressed from 'adding women as a variable,' to establishing gender as an analytic category (Peterson, 1992; 17-18). The transition from 'women' to 'gender' is clearly identifiable in 'gender mainstreaming,' which represents a shift from adding women to established policies, to using gender as a core unit of analysis in the development of policy. If one is to conceptualise gender mainstreaming in the maximalist terms in which it is promoted by international organisations it appears to promise a similarly radical overhaul of policy.

> 'governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively' (United Nations, 1996; 11).

The theory behind 'gender mainstreaming' assumes that it is the gendered nature of the policy and bureaucratic structures and not the gender of the policy-maker or decision-maker that causes gender inequalities to be reproduced. This theory is derived from feminist thought, fostered within the women's movement but is lost in the translation of 'gender' into mainstream policy-making terms.

> 'The theoretical roots of gender mainstreaming are in gender analysis and feminist theory, while the practical roots can be found in the traditions of radical social movements for the developing world, the disabled and the environment' (Woodward, 2001; 13).

This thesis argues that the theoretical roots of mainstreaming must be accessed in order to understand the impediments that exist to implementation. At the very least, an awareness that there exists a gap between the theory and practice of gender mainstreaming allows scholars and practitioners to identify the main challenges that still exist for the policy. Thus, the main challenges for gender mainstreaming are threefold:

Firstly, the translation of political ideals into practical policy tools in that the former, by nature aspirational, impedes the development of the more instrumental latter. Secondly, the location of knowledge about gender inequality and conceptual tools for its eradication exist almost exclusively within feminist communities. How can this knowledge be accessed and translated into mainstream policy-making systems without being appropriated and losing its transformative potential? Thirdly, the international origins and orientation of mainstreaming render it open to huge variance in interpretation at the national level.

These challenges raise significant theoretical questions for gender mainstreaming. One of the key aims of this thesis is to identify and articulate the challenges and opportunities of gender mainstreaming for feminist and policy-making communities in terms meaningful to both. This task begins with a detailed, critical analysis of the literature on gender mainstreaming, gender equality in the Republic of Ireland and the contribution of feminist theories to current debates on gender mainstreaming.

Chapter Three

THEORETICAL DEBATE AND PRACTICAL POLICY

3.1 Introduction

As stated earlier, this thesis seeks to make a contribution to the literature struggling to come to terms with the global proliferation of gender mainstreaming as an idea, and as a policy tool. In terms of the academic literature there is little doubt that feminist contributions to International Relations, political science, policy-making and political theory together represent a theoretical and methodological base, which draws together diverse arguments and perspectives informing gender mainstreaming. Feminism tends to cross-cut a number of literatures and is relevant to all aspects of gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is, therefore, most easily identified as an opportunity to expand and develop feminist thought and political activity, particularly given its practical manifestation on a global basis.

Norms and State Behaviour

The literature identifying norms as measurable practices and principles at the international level will be used as a means of understanding and explaining the translation of ideas from international to national political institutions. Within the literature specific to 'gender mainstreaming' one finds the concepts and categories of constructivists like Finnemore and Sikkink (1998) who explore the relevance of norms in the spread of ideas internationally. Borrowing from feminism and constructivism in IR the concept of an

international gender norm is used to describe and analyse gender mainstreaming by a number of gender mainstreaming scholars (True and Mintrom, 2001; 40; Elgstrom, 2000). True and Mintrom identify the concept of international norms, as a powerful means of explaining how states are socialised in norms that shape their behaviour in the international sphere. These norms primarily arise from state participation in international organisations and supranational institutions (2001; 40-41). Specifically, True and Mintrom (2001) recognise that the proliferation of international mainstreaming norms via International organisations,

> 'could be explained by this global normative change and by the state socialisation process that it sets in motion' (True and Mintrom, 2001; 40).

Those working on norms generally recognise the importance of language as a means of spreading norms, but scholars of international gender norms have not taken the analysis of gender mainstreaming to that point, as yet. Feminists have for some time recognised language as a means of socially constructing gender roles (Spender, 1980). For instance, Meyer (in Meyer and Prügl (1999; 61) recognise how international human rights discourse marginalizes women from the international human rights framework with the use of 'universalizing language.'

> 'The most obvious example is the universalising language (e.g., "man," "mankind") of international human rights conventions that obscures or omits the specific experiences of women' (Meyer and Prügl, 1999; 61).[51]

[51] Elsewhere, it has been recognised that the 'fluidity of international relations and the fragility of its existing forms may make it easier in certain circumstances for new ideas and concepts to gain ground' (Hoskyns, 1994; 226).

The failure of scholars to recognise the potential of language change as a means of following the impact of gender mainstreaming norms is linked to the more fundamental failure of the literature to recognise the significance of the gap between theory and practice in the mainstreaming movement until very recently (True, 2003; 383). Particularly relevant is the gap between knowledge and data, which the theory-practice gap produces. This deficiency also illustrates the level of diversity and disagreement that exists between different branches of feminism.[52] The literature on gender and language is used to develop this critique into an argument for a qualitative methodology to assess the impact of international gender policy at state-level.

3.2 Gender Mainstreaming Research

This section of the literature review critiques intellectual work on gender mainstreaming to date (Rees, 1998; Elgström, 2000; Mazey, 2000; Mossink, 2001; Woodward, 2001; Verloo, 2001). This literature falls into three separate sections. The early work of 'gender experts' (Woodward, 1999; Woodward, 2001; Verloo, 2001), which assesses and critiques the policy from a particular 'feminist'[53] perspective. This work provides useful insights into the mechanics of gender equality policy-making and is absolutely central as authors in this bracket amount to the epistemic community identified as key to establishing gender mainstreaming as institutionalised feminism (Haas, 1992). Also, there are theorists such as

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[52] See footnote 49 below.

[53] As stated in Chapter 2, it is widely recognised within Feminism, (but largely ignored without) that Feminism is an extremely heterogeneous intellectual body of work. There are a multitude of different types of 'Feminism' often with conflicting discourses, practices and perspectives (True in Burchill and Linklater, 1996; 212). The feminism I refer to in this particular body of literature is essentially liberal in its assumptions.

Mazey (2000; 2001), Elgström (2000) and Rees (1998) who recognise 'mainstreaming' as a significant development for both policy and gender analysis. Finally, there is a large amount of policy and official literature on 'gender mainstreaming' that details methods for implementing the policy of mainstreaming (Corner, 1999; European Commission, 1998). These literatures are reviewed in terms of the goals and limitations of gender mainstreaming, the issue of language in the diffusion of gender mainstreaming, the role of feminist theory in developing gender mainstreaming, and the opportunities for feminism presented by gender mainstreaming. Most of this literature fails to satisfactorily address the potential of gender mainstreaming as introducing a new subject to feminist research. However, more recent work (True, 2003; Woodward, 2003, von Braunmühl in Braig and Wolte, 2002; Rai 2003) presents the kind of theoretically challenging and empirically engaged analysis that implies successful theoretical development of gender mainstreaming in the future.

The conceptual approach taken in this thesis is contrasted with much of the research on gender mainstreaming which until recently was limited to specific discussions of gender mainstreaming by 'gender experts' implicated in the policy process. For instance, Alison Woodward (2001; 2003) who has produced some important papers on the mainstreaming process, has also published a handbook on the practice.[54] This literature is extremely useful in advancing the academic profile of gender mainstreaming. However, the literature by 'gender experts' rarely moves beyond the first goal of gender mainstreaming identified as such in Chapter 2:

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[54] Woodward, A. (1997) *Handboek bij de Emancipatie-Effect Rapportage.* Brussels: Vlaamse Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap.

> 'gender mainstreaming is a mechanism for government to adopt ideas from the women's movement in an area where traditional legislative approaches have been disappointing.'

Moreover, these analyses often suggest an almost random number of alternative ideas and perspectives that surround gender mainstreaming (Woodward, 1999), lacking the disciplinary boundaries enjoyed (though often criticised) by feminist international relations scholars. The work of gender experts such as Woodward (2001), Verloo (1999) and Mossink (2001) can seem obtuse and introspective to those without a feminist background. All three vaguely imply that feminism is a 'good thing' while mainstream bureaucracy and policy-making is 'gendered.' Feminist suspicions of 'mainstreaming' are clearly articulated by Woodward (1999; 133):

> 'Another very real fear is that by sharing gender issues with non-experts and spreading it out across all sectors of society, the notion of gender can become an empty set' (Woodward, 1999; 133).[55]

The main drawback of earlier writing on gender mainstreaming (Woodward, 1999; Mossink, 2001) was that authors examined specific instances of 'mainstreaming', but were theoretically indeterminate, and therefore failed to augment the general understanding of essential questions such as what gender mainstreaming implies for policy-making. Rather, they expressed a fear that the 'deeply subversive and transformative nature'[56] of 'gender mainstreaming' would be lost in the policy-making

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[55] Woodward is not alone in expressing fear of appropriation. Virtually all feminists writing on gender mainstreaming expressed similar fears. These fears are still expressed in more recent work on gender mainstreaming (Woodward, 2003; 70; von Braunmuhl in Braig and Wolte, 2002; 67-68).

[56] Mossink, M. (2001) 'Gender Impact Assessment of Policy Proposals: A Magic Wand ?' *Unpublished paper prepared for the APPAM Fall Conference.* pp. 12.

process. For instance, Woodward (2001) simultaneously criticised and approved 'gender mainstreaming.'[57] By 2003 Woodward has made one of the most useful contributions to the literature on gender mainstreaming. She was the first to get to grips with the fundamental theory-practice dichotomy at the root of mainstreaming's current implementation problems (Woodward, 1999). This problem is later more explicitly identified by True (2003; 383) as the primary 'constraining factor' on the development of gender mainstreaming. Woodward (2001) is also among the first to recognise the potential of language as a means of unravelling the mainstreaming web, though she does not link this analysis to the idea of mainstreaming as an international norm:

> 'That mainstreaming seems to have been so easily accepted by signatory countries to the Beijing action platform could be a sign that, while gender aware policy-makers and feminists seem to be speaking the same language as power-holders who have complied with their requests, what that language might mean in practice is perhaps different' (Woodward, 1999; 137).

In a later re-working of her 2001 article, Woodward (2003) is less overtly cynical about gender mainstreaming. The 2003 analysis is generally an extremely useful and welcome contribution to a rapidly expanding literature on gender mainstreaming, it hints at how language, power and knowledge interact to enable or disarm gender mainstreaming. Woodward (2003) is still concerned with the potential for feminist ideas to be diluted by the practice of mainstreaming:

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[57] Woodward, Alison E. (2001) 'Gender Mainstreaming in European Policy: Innovation or Deception?' *Discussion Paper: WZB-Berlin 2001. pp. 133-143.*

> '... any review of definitions of gender mainstreaming indicates that compromises in the language of gender have been necessitated' (Woodward, 2003; 67).

She does, therefore, begin the process of unravelling the complex relationship between language, ideology, bureaucracy and feminism, which gender mainstreaming reveals. The material impact of this relationship was earlier identified by Mazey (2000; 343) when she argued that the theory and practice of gender mainstreaming were mutually influential and possibly reinforcing. Mazey (2000) articulated the radical potential of gender mainstreaming, but also how this potential was contingent on first overcoming some profound ideological challenges:

> '...it (gender mainstreaming) will require EU and national policy-makers to review critically the way they conceptualise policy problems. Such a change will entail questioning of deeply embedded cultural values and policy frames, supported by institutions and powerful advocacy coalitions. For these reasons, gender mainstreaming is arguably a deceptively simple concept that is likely to be extremely difficult to operationalise. However, whether or not this proves to be the case will require further research' (Mazey, 2000; 343).

Further research was justified in that the actual impact of such compromise is more clearly identified in later publications. The maturation of gender mainstreaming as both a concept and a policy over the past ten years has led to more sophisticated, extensive and articulate discussions of the phenomenon by feminist authors. True (2003; 385) articulates fears of appropriation as a more specific fear that gender mainstreaming is overly compatible with neo-liberal economic strategies. This idea is developed by von Braunmühl in Braig and

Wölte (2002; 65), who recognises this compatibility as a product of the fact that gender mainstreaming is a function of international ideas and national circumstances:

> 'gender mandates cannot escape the macroeconomic and macropolitical context into which they are integrated. In fact they are not supposed to – that is the very essence of mainstreaming' (von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 79).

Linking the national and international, the liberal and the radical, the practical and the theoretical aspects of gender mainstreaming, begins to provide some explanation of how the challenge identified by von Braunmühl is manifest.

Both True (2003) and von Braunmühl (in Braig and Wölte, 2002) belong to a category of feminist thought that analyses international politics from a feminist perspective: feminist international relations. Feminists theorising international relations link knowledge, theory, practice and power in their analysis of international politics and gender. By engaging the work of such theorists, including Baden and Goetz (1997), Elshtain (1997), Enloe (1989) and Whitworth (1997) whose feminist critique of political science and International Relations applies concrete feminist concepts, the kind of gender biases Woodward (2001), Verloo (2001) and Mossink (2001) failed adequately to express are rendered meaningful. [58] The challenge lies in the fact that authors like Mossink (2001) working at the coal face of 'gender mainstreaming,' often present the most interested and informed work. Verloo's (2001) dismissal of the 'Diversity Impact Assessment' establishes the relevance of

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[58] For instance, in reference to international organisations Whitworth recognises that silences can be revelatory in terms of the status of a group or issue within an institution. 'The construction of assumptions around gender is produced as much by what *is not* said as much as what *is said'* (author's emphasis) Whitworth, S. (1997) *Feminism and International Relations* Basingstoke: Macmillan. pp. 75. This argument is explicitly expressed in the concluding sections of this Chapter.

knowledge of substantive equality issues for policy-makers (Verloo, 2001). However, methodological and theoretical introspection result in their work remaining marginal as there is no point of reference for anyone outside the community of 'gender experts.'[59] For instance, Mossink's (2001) study of the Dutch 'gender mainstreaming' instrument reflects deeply embedded assumptions as to the 'rightness' of gender mainstreaming's core aims without ever explicitly identifying what those aims are. The bias rests on her assumption that the EER (Dutch gender impact assessment) is failing because it has lost its feminist core

> '...it allows policy-makers to do their own thing and keep the wolf that is of course hidden in the EER safely at bay' (Mossink, 2001; 13).

Finally, this literature is in severe danger of invalidating its core arguments by failing to address alternative perspectives, such as:

(i) Feminist critiques of gender mainstreaming.

(ii) Norms in International Relations (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998).

(iii) Non-feminist appropriation of gender mainstreaming.

(iv) Official UN documents on gender mainstreaming.

(v) Non-feminist literature on power (Haas, 1992).

Neither Mossink (2001) nor Woodward (2001; 2003) realise the potential of 'gender mainstreaming' if one considers the success of international standards elsewhere such as

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[59] This approach fails to evaluate the possibilities gender mainstreaming offers in terms of developing policy outside the bureaucratic structure.

in the area of human rights (Klotz, 1995; Risse *et. al.*, 1999). The experience of human rights is relevant as it demonstrates the possibility of questioning dominant structures and arguing for (and thereby legitimating) a fairer and freer mode of organisation. Moreover, as they never get to grips with what gender mainstreaming means it is very difficult to offer a coherent argument without falling into the trap of defining gender mainstreaming down to a particular manifestation or institutional context.[60] Despite these problems, this literature is central in the formulation of gender mainstreaming for a number of reasons. Firstly, in Woodward's defence, she was one of the first to identify and address the multiple implications of gender mainstreaming at a time when few had the courage of intellect to investigate such a new development. Moreover, this 'capture'[61] of the mainstreaming agenda by feminism can be used to better understand the policy, particularly when such capture is re-conceptualised as 'control over knowledge' as exercised by a 'knowledge elite' (Haas, 1992; 30).

> 'Some claim that gender awareness needs expertise and should be left to professionals (who are certified in Women's Studies, for example)' (Woodward, 2003; 69).

Most importantly, this literature reveals the centrality of feminism to the mainstreaming agenda in terms of obscuring or illuminating the project, its conceptual basis, and how it moves from concept to policy outcome. This becomes evident as each area of the relevant literature is explored.

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[60] Even Woodward's latest effort (2003), though much clearer than earlier work, is still struggling to articulate gender mainstreaming. In a section entitled 'what is gender mainstreaming' Woodward (2003; 66-7) refers to equal opportunities, 'institutional innovation' concluding that the term has been 'misused' by various organisations.

[61] See note 27.

Another strand of literature specific to 'gender mainstreaming' is that with which my study most clearly identifies. It includes the work of theorists such as Mazey (2000; 2001) and Elgström (2000) who interpret the mainstreaming agenda in its most ambitious guise and ask fundamental questions about the implications it has for mainstream policy-making and analysis. In doing so, they establish a challenging research agenda.

> 'Thus a key theoretical/methodological question for public policy analysts seeking to incorporate gender into their research is how this might be achieved' (Mazey, 2000; 335).

Usefully, Mazey (2000) locates these challenges within the development of post-positivist critique, recognising that the 'mainstreaming' agenda and the horizontal insertion of gender into policy and policy analytic work raises questions about 'existing conceptual categories, theoretical frameworks and research methodologies' (Mazey, 2000; 335). These questions are pursued in the latter half of the thesis. Moreover, Mazey (2000) makes an explicit link between second-wave feminism and the turn to critique in political science, so recognising how a combination of social movement and academic innovation has created a new space for analysis that uses 'ideas, norms, language and institutions' as units of analysis (Mazey, 2000; 335). The volume of work Mazey (2000) introduces seeks to use 'new post-positivist analytical and methodological approaches' to enhance our understanding of policy-making and gender (Mazey, 2000; 335). A series of authors from different disciplinary backgrounds conduct a number of studies of the integration of

gender in a variety of policy environments.[62] To some extent, this reflects the multitude of conflicting discourses that surround the gender equality agenda worldwide (Baden and Goetz, 1997; 3), for instance, liberal and radical feminist agendas communicating with liberal and social democratic systems and institutions in the West. Meanwhile transition states in Eastern Europe and the 'developing' nations in the South present entirely different political and cultural structures and perceptions of gender (Jahan, 1995; 7) but are subject to the same 'gender mainstreaming' agenda. Moreover, these studies demonstrate the enormity of the task that 'mainstreaming' faces in initially breaking down and later re-building established procedures, norms, institutions and practices regarding gender equality, before the 'mainstreaming' agenda can be introduced.

The literature on the transition from WID to GAD is also a fruitful basis on which to develop a theoretical basis for the practice of 'gender mainstreaming,' as demonstrated by von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 68) whose useful discussion of gender mainstreaming draws on experience in development. This literature (Moser, 1993; Baden and Goetz, 1997; Newland) attacks the political basis on which knowledge about gender and development was used to pursue feminist goals. In short, it bridges the theory-practice divide in a way that current literature on gender mainstreaming does not. The literature on development, particularly gender and development is a recognised category of feminist international relations (IR) (Sylvester, 1991). This literature, together with the flourishing literature on norms as an analytic category (True, 2001; 4) in the study of international politics, provided some insight as to how macro-political and economic contexts at the

[62] The volume covers everything from childcare policy in Eastern Europe to feminist challenges to the EU legal order. Mazey, S. (2000) *op. cit.*, 333-45.

national level could influence gender policy-making. This literature has informed this research in a number of fruitful ways. Firstly, feminist IR has been recognised as such since the early 1990s, about the same time as the idea of gender mainstreaming materialized in development studies (True and Mintrom, 2001; 31). The literature on gender and development has since provided experiential based analysis (Goetz, 1997) and rigorous theoretical questioning of gender mainstreaming (True, 2003). Secondly, the relationship between power and knowledge has been a central concern of IR feminists for some time (Peterson, 1992). Likewise, in this thesis, the role of knowledge, particularly knowledge about gender as a socially constructed category with implications for political rights, participation and representation is identified as key to achieving the goals of gender mainstreaming. The importance of feminist theory as a political statement (Elshtain, 1997; 92) and debates within feminist theory about knowledge, power and gender mainstreaming (Wichterich in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 51) are used to build the multi-level analysis of gender mainstreaming that culminates in sketching its future in Chapter 7. This analysis begins with a discussion of the duality of gender mainstreaming, often simultaneously described as both a practical policy tool and an international gender norm.

3.2.1 A practical policy tool

The dual conceptualisation of gender mainstreaming as a practical policy tool and a related intellectual challenge must be addressed in order to understand the centrality of data and knowledge to understanding the past, interpreting the present and predicting the future of gender mainstreaming. Beveridge *et. al.* (2000; 390) crucially note the challenge that mainstreaming represents in terms of implementation but also its potential in terms of innovative policy-making

> 'mainstreaming has the potential to deliver far more radical change than positive discrimination and may therefore be a more constructive approach as far as women are concerned' (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 391).

However, the Beveridge *et. al.* (2000) article is typical of the vast majority of mainstreaming studies in that it calls for ambitious, innovative research that captures the complexity of the 'mainstreaming' agenda but fails to deliver on its own requirements. In fact, the study limits itself to traditional liberal feminist arguments regarding parity of representation, and reform of existing structures in decision-making claiming that it is

> 'too early to comment on whether or not they are likely to succeed in 'engendering policy-making' in any comprehensive sense' (Beveridge *et al.,* 2000; 403).

Doubtless, 'gender mainstreaming' is at an early stage in terms of judging its impact, however, this does not preclude scholars from developing creative and effective methods to assess its impact in the future (see Mazey, 2000). In fact, throughout this thesis it is argued that the agenda set out for gender mainstreaming in even the earliest policy documents is evidently at odds with the mainstream equality policy-making agenda. For

instance, the strategic objectives of the Platform for Action (United Nations, 1995) are rooted in a feminist agenda that questions core values of procedural equality centred on the labour market in national and supranational policy-making machineries (Galligan, 1998; 64; Hoskyns in Elman, 1996; 22). This is not evident in the literature, which reflects the conceptual underdevelopment rather than the innovative potential of 'gender mainstreaming.' For instance, while Mazey's later (2001) study of the principles and practices of gender mainstreaming in the EU presents significant conceptual development on earlier work, she still presents a similarly narrow interpretation of the mainstreaming project.

> 'If women's interests are to be effectively incorporated into the policy-making process...' (Mazey, 2001; 14).

Mazey applies the concept of norms in a meaningful way

> 'Gender mainstreaming therefore requires policy-makers to question existing policy frames based upon deeply rooted 'core beliefs' (Sabatier, 1998 quoted in Mazey, 2001; 13).

This 'reorientation' will require considerable 'policy learning' and adaptation of core values on the part of policy-makers' (Mazey, 2001; 13). This implies that gender mainstreaming has not moved beyond a liberal-reformist (WID) strategy, and has thereby failed to effectively establish gender as an analytic category. That said Mazey's work is a valuable resource for augmenting levels of understanding surrounding 'gender mainstreaming.'[63]

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[63] Mazey (2001; 21-28) provides a lucid account of how mainstreaming sits with established EU gender equality policy.

In her latest (2003) publication Woodward articulates the paradoxical relationship between gender mainstreaming's core aim, to achieve 'a revolutionary goal, e.g. the end of sexual inequality' and its utilisation of 'rational public administrative tools' to achieve that goal. Woodward (2003; 69) concludes that

> 'Mainstreaming and its implementation would denote using bureaucratic tools to gain power over the definitions of men and women.'

Woodward does therefore gain some ground in articulating the central paradox of gender mainstreaming, though this paradox is never clearly identified as a challenge for which there are possible means of addressing.

Despite the variance in approaches amongst feminist and non-feminist authors on gender mainstreaming there is some consensus on the use of norms as a unit of analysis in the mainstreaming project (Mazey, 2000; 2001; True, 2001; Elgström, 2000; Whitworth, 1997; Woodward, 2001). Even those who do not explicitly identify gender mainstreaming as 'international gender norms' do recognise the importance of normative agreement amongst implementing communities.

> 'Institutional innovation occurs best in a context where values are present that can be mobilized in service for the new institution' (Woodward, 2003; 69).

The next section of the review identifies 'gender mainstreaming' as comparable with international norms in human rights and global security. The literature on norms in international relations is, therefore, central to the empirical aspect of the thesis.

3.2.2 An international gender norm

The role of non-state actors in producing and propagating international norms, constituted in (alternative) identities and interests has been recognised by IR theorists.

> '...interpretivists argue that international actors are inherently socially constructed; their identities and interests are partially defined by prevailing constitutive norms, which vary over time' (Klotz, 1995; 17).

Theorists like Klotz (1995) argue that international norms affect and reflect the interests of international actors such as the international anti-apartheid or women's movement and the UN and EU. The principle of gender equality and the idea that gender bias results from socially constructed structures is central to feminist theory and is integral to the 'gender mainstreaming' project (Galligan et. al., 2000; 11; Phillips, 1999; 17). The globalisation of these norms through international institutions results in the reflection of interests developed outside the nation-state.

> 'In the evolution of contemporary feminism, the focus has widened to include global concerns such as the economy, environment and sustainable development' (Karl, 1995; 38).

This is precisely the case with gender mainstreaming in which feminist assumptions, derived from international activity in organisations (UN) and the women's movement, are implemented in national level policy-making. Ward's (1999) study analyses the role of the

Irish national women's movement in the spread of the ideas of 'planetary feminism.'[64] Ward (1999; 216) documents the role of the UN 'women's agenda' in providing an institutional base for the activities of the international women's movement. Moreover, she identifies the 1970s resurgence in international feminist activity as resulting in a more strategic, focused and organised campaign. This movement campaigned at both national and international levels, using international institutions as loci for communication and as providers of funding and political legitimacy. The result is an international feminist agenda that is more strategic, more demanding and conceptually more sophisticated than national level gender equality policy-making. 'Gender mainstreaming,' is at the centre of this feminist agenda. In a broad context of international gender norm diffusion Ward (1999; 222-3) concludes:

> '...the evidence suggests that the women's movement, through a combination of all the routes described above has, over a long time, influenced the language, conceptual thinking and policy outcomes of the UN multilateral conferences on women. It has brought about norm changes.'

Whether these norms can be translated to changes in the status of gender equality as a policy goal depends on how successfully these norms are operationalised at the national level (Chapters 5, 6 and 7). Key to operationalising these norms at the national level is communicating the new international standards in gender equality to permanent bureaucrats. In turn, this process is dependent on the extent to which existing ideological and political structures facilitate the integration of new norms.

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[64] Morgan, R. (1985) *Sisterhood is Global: the international women's movement anthology* London: Penguin quoted in Ward, 1999, *op. cit.* pp. 214.

Keck and Sikkink (1998) study the power of transnational advocacy networks in the proliferation of principles, ideas and norms on a global scale. They offer a convincing interpretation of norms from the perspective of change. Building on the initial work of Katzenstein et. al. (1996) they attempt to measure the impact or effects of norms, conceptualising norms as learned and shared behaviours that become automatic over time.

> 'Similarily, we can imagine norms whose practice over time has become so automatic that they gain a taken-for-granted quality, in which practices and standards become so routinized as to be taken almost as laws of nature. Normative change is inherently disruptive or difficult because it requires actors to question this routinized practice and contemplate new practices'[65]

This articulation of norms most clearly illustrates its utility as a unit of analysis in the study of gender mainstreaming. The introduction of gender mainstreaming not only requires that policy-makers implement a new policy. It requires a fundamental re-building of existing policy practices in order to insert a strategic gender equality initiative horizontally (Woodward, 2003; 70). For instance, in the Republic of Ireland, gender mainstreaming is implemented through the National Development Plan, a seven-year programme with six different Operational Programmes.[66] Cross-cutting these Operational Programmes are 'horizontal issues,' of which gender mainstreaming is one. So, apart from

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[65] Bourdieu, Pierre (1977) *Outline of Theory and Practice* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press in Keck, M. and Sikkink, K. (1998) *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* Ithaca: Cornell University Press. pp. 35.

[66] 'Operational programmes' include productive investment, human resources development, peace in Northern Ireland and regional development. Ireland (2000) *National Development Plan 2000-2006.* Dublin: Stationery Office.

promoting research, technological development and innovation, indigenous and Foreign Direct Investment, marketing and sea fisheries development, a policy-maker working on the Productive Sector operational programme is expected to analyse policy for its impact on the environment, rural society, poverty reduction and gender relations[67] (Author Interview, R6, July, 2002). In this context, it is possible to conceive of norms as allowing for a conception of change that is gradual, piecemeal, and incremental. The conception of gradual change is particularly useful when one considers that gender mainstreaming is a programme for change working on implicit assumptions derived from feminism, by definition not a mainstream school of thought. Meanwhile, Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein (in Katzenstein, 1996; 54) argue that while in general terms norms are seen as shared values within a community, they may also be *collective* in the sense that they are institutionalised in the discourse or procedures of a system without being widely held (Katzenstein, 1996; 54).

> 'That's the problem for equality – it is marginalized. To some extent that's the benefit with gender mainstreaming; – it centralises the concepts so that they become part of general policy and then you get funding. And that's what you want in the long run to become part of the general funding…' (Author Interview; R3, July, 2002; 5).

International gender norms, constituted in the policy of 'gender mainstreaming,' may in fact be easily identified as collective without actually becoming common or shared norms (Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein in Katzenstein, 1996; 54) within the community of policy-makers in the Republic of Ireland.

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[67] Rural proofing, poverty proofing, gender mainstreaming and environmental proofing are known amongst policy-makers as 'horizontal issues.'

'...sometimes I just can't believe how short-sighted people are. Equality is about everything and in order to achieve it there has to be a fundamental change – economically, socially, culturally or on a human rights basis. (Author Interview; R3, July, 2002; 5).

Building on the idea of collective norms, Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein (in Katzenstein, 1996; 54) allude to the possible utility of language as a medium of social practice and recommend a linguistic analytical approach in future research on the detection of a norm and its impact (Jepperson, Wendt and Katzenstein (in Katzenstein, 1996; 65). The next section of the review outlines how literature on the relationship between gender and language and language and bureaucracy provides a method for interpreting international gender norms and analysing their effects at domestic level.

3.2.3 Language and Dominance

This section of the Chapter combines arguments surrounding norms in international relations with feminist arguments about language as a medium of concept change and renewal. Constructivists studying norms in International Relations recognise language as a creator and constituent of gender roles (Jepperson et. al., 1996; 64). Feminists argue that language is not a neutral expression of reality but rather a code of meaning primarily based on an androcentric world view (Ehrlich and King in Cameron, 1998; 165). The literature on gender mainstreaming recognises that gender mainstreaming conveys a variety of meanings to different audiences (Woodward, 2001; 6). Meanwhile, Wodak

(1997) and Gill (1995) argue that language is a sound indicator of gender relations and that gender relations are 'constituted' in language. This literature suggests that gender relations within the Irish bureaucracy can be adequately and effectively investigated through examining narratives on gender used by the bureaucracy. The research revealed that low levels of understanding of how gender impacts on policy-making, was reflected in a deficit of vocabulary around the process of gender mainstreaming. In turn, this lack of vocabulary was traced to more profound differences between the ideological leanings and political priorities of mainstream policies and gender mainstreaming.

The development of gender inclusive and 'neutral' terminology such as 'gender mainstreaming' is somehow threatening because it reveals the extent to which established language is gendered.

> 'At a deep level, changes in a language are threatening because they signal widespread changes in social mores' (Miller and Swift, 1980 quoted in Cameron, 1985; 176).

Specifically, the perceived 'inappropriateness' of such genderless terms reveals how dichotomised 'normal' language use is, both in terms of the gendered nature of specific words, for example 'prostitute' versus 'male prostitute' and 'doctor' versus 'lady doctor', and the social roles that are implied by those words. Cameron (1985) also argues that language must pass through a number of mainstream institutions before it is legitimated.

> 'Any new terms feminists come up with, in order to be institutionalised in the official public domains of language use, have to pass a number of 'gatekeepers' –

the media, education, lexicography – who are very far from being neutral' (Cameron, 1985; 82).

For instance, she also asserts that some words become institutionalised more quickly than others. For instance, feminist terms that are now part of mainstream language use include 'sexist', 'sexism' 'sexual harassment', 'male chauvinism' and 'battered wives' (Cameron, 1985; 82). However, words like 'patriarchy', 'unwaged', 'double loaded' 'heterosexism' 'male violence' have not been so well received (Cameron, 1985; 82). Moreover, Cameron argues that the media have been derogatory about terms like 'Ms.', 'person' and 'feminist' (Cameron, 1985; 82). This point illustrates that a feminist term is only thought to be 'over the top' or 'extreme' or 'radical' if it has not become part of general language use. By implication it is arguable that any word, concept or idea is deemed 'normal' not because it contains any inherent 'normal' characteristics, but rather because it is given that status. Cameron (1985) goes on to identify a dictionary as sexist if it

'fails to invest feminist words and definitions with permanence, official sanction and authority' (Cameron, 1985; 83).

Meanwhile, DeFrancisco (in Wodak, 1997) in her discussion of 'gender, power and practice' remarks how researchers have tended to take a less than ambitious route in how they study gender issues, not moving beyond measuring the superficial. She argues for a movement beyond gender and 'beyond a world organised by oppressive social categories' (DeFrancisco in Wodak, 1997; 38), but encounters problems describing the kinds of categories and methods of analysis that are necessary for this change. DeFrancisco (in Wodak, 1997) recognises that it is difficult to move that interpretation of power differences beyond the general.

> 'As researchers, we need to examine the layers of cultural and interpersonal context and privilege, and the links between each' (DeFrancisco in Wodak, 1997; 38).

This transition is absolutely central to the idea of mainstreaming and also key to explaining why it makes little or no sense to non-feminists. Mainstream vocabulary, language, concepts and ideas do not facilitate the articulation of transformatory conceptions of gender equality, and this is especially the case within established bureaucratic practice.[68] Chapters 5 and 6 identify these language gaps as an indicator of the centrality of feminist knowledge to the implementation of gender mainstreaming in terms of the main conclusions of the research. Findings reported in Chapter 6 reveal how the language deficit, stemming from low levels of gender knowledge beyond the feminist community, results in an over-reliance on data and quantitative indicators as expressions of gender inequality. Data gathered without conceptual signs and guides is relatively useless, as it is not accompanied by a substantive and articulate plan as to what precise purpose it should serve. The first stage in this discovery is mapped in the following section which reports how vocabularies of gender mainstreaming are built in order to build administrators capacity to work with the policy.

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[68] This fact is recognised by the Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister) in his formal statement on 'gender mainstreaming' to policy-makers. "It requires us to re-think established norms and behaviours and to adjust our perceptions, attitudes and behaviour.' (at http://www.irlgov.ie/taoiseach/press/current/29-04-99.htm).

3.2.4 A vocabulary of gender mainstreaming

Language can act as a powerful inhibitor or promoter of new norms. In the case of gender mainstreaming, many of the terms that have developed around gender mainstreaming norms have been identified as meaningless to permanent bureaucrats. The centrality of language in the translation of international norms into policy at the national level is illustrated by the development of a 'vocabulary of gender mainstreaming' by those implementing the policy in the Republic of Ireland (www.ndpgenderequality.ie). The glossary of terms relating to the policy is reflective of the conflict surrounding definitions and interpretations of gender mainstreaming. The purpose of this exercise is to conceptualise gender mainstreaming on two levels – as an international norm and as a practical policy tool. The remainder of the section reviews the literature to date in terms of this dual conception of gender mainstreaming.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the fact that the gender expert in the Irish case has deemed it necessary to publish a vocabulary of gender mainstreaming. Firstly, it demonstrates that policy-makers have difficulty understanding the language and concepts deemed necessary for the successful adoption of gender mainstreaming. Secondly, the fact that there are a number of different concepts and methods that sum to a vocabulary of gender mainstreaming suggests that gender mainstreaming is a complex and multi-faceted process. Thirdly, the vocabulary demonstrates that in order to be successful, gender mainstreaming must operate at both the practical (gathering and analysis of gender disaggregated data, gender proofing methods) and at a conceptual level (concepts of

gender, gender-neutral, gender-blind). Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrate how these two aspects of gender mainstreaming are inter-related. Irish policy-makers and femocrats are not alone in developing a glossary of equality. The European Commission (1998) has also published a glossary of terms relating to equality '100 Words for Equality: a glossary of terms on equality between women and men' in an attempt to

> ' put together all the terms commonly used in the area of equality policy, and ... to create a common language in Europe for all actors in this field' (Flynn, Foreward in European Commission, 1998; 3).

In fact many of the terms identified as 'gender mainstreaming vocabulary' by Irish policy-makers are taken from the document published by the Commission. These are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Gender Mainstreaming Vocabulary

Gender	A concept that refers to the social differences, as opposed to the biological ones, between women and men that have been learned, are changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures.
Gender mainstreaming	The systematic integration of the respective situations, priorities and needs of women and men in all mainstream policies with a view to promoting equality between women and men.
Gender neutral	In policy terms, a policy which has no differential impact, either postive or negative, for equality between women and men.
Gender blind	Ignoring or failing to address the gender equality dimension.
Gender disaggregated data	The collection and separation of data by gender to allow comparative gender analysis.
Gender equality	The concept that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles; that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally.
Gender proofing	A check carried out on a policy proposal to ensure that any potential gender discriminatory effects arising from that policy have been avoided and that gender equality is promoted.
Gender impact assessment	Examining policy proposals to see whether they will affect women and men differently, with a view to adapting these proposals to make sure that any discriminatory effects are neutralised and that gender equality is promoted.
Postive action	Measures targeted at a particular group and intended to eliminate and prevent discrimination or to offset disadvantages arising from existing attitudes, behaviours and structures.

Source: http://www.ndpgenderequality.ie

The one hundred words for equality identified by the Commission are a useful indicator of language use and evolution regarding gender equality across the EU in recent years. Many words, not explicitly identified as 'gender mainstreaming vocabulary' are listed, each in the 11 languages of the Union (up until enlargement in May 2004), with the explicit goal of

> 'getting the information about European policies out of the circle of initiated people and making them accessible and understandable by all citizens' (European Commission, 1998; 3).

This explicit goal recognises that language may be an obstacle to building knowledge about gender, which itself is recognised as an integral part of achieving equality (European Commission, 1998; 3). Given that this document offers a concise overview of the language and terminology currently used by gender mainstreaming and other equality policy-makers in Ireland and the EU, the terms listed are categorised under six broad headings related to the main arguments of the thesis (see tables 2-6, appendix 1). Specifically, the first three tables clearly relate to equality policy-making as they describe and define tools, instruments, policies and programmes. The latter three largely relate to the meaning of gender mainstreaming, feminist concepts, and EU applications of ideas surrounding gender equality.

The first table includes terms clearly and explicitly identifiable as of direct relevance to the mainstreaming agenda. Terms that reflect the gender equality agenda prior to mainstreaming, many of which are still relevant to the Irish case, are identified in a second category. Terms related to the labour market, identified throughout the thesis as a major component of Irish and EU gender equality policy-making, are identified in a third table. This is the largest category and contains the most sophisticated terminology, combining feminist, rational bureaucratic and neo-liberal concepts to produce tools for the achievement of EU objectives surrounding employment.[69] The fourth table includes terms that can be identified as 'feminist.' These terms would appear more often in the feminist

[69] The predominance of employment as a factor in the pursuit of equality is recognized by one respondent, when asked to comment on some contemporary gender equality policy-making vocabulary: '...if you look you have changes in gender language in Ireland since the 1970s and actually every single one of these is related to employment except the first one - working mothers, parental leave, no, two income families, homeworker equal pay - they're nearly all work and that's what everybody sees. We are trying to make them see that there's lots of other areas like transport or housing where there are gender impacts and employment is one thing in it' (Author Interview, R1, February 2002; 6).

literature on policy-making and gender mainstreaming, and would generally not be considered part of everyday policy-making lexicography. A fifth table is reserved for terms that are used to define or articulate 'gender mainstreaming.' Finally, a special category is created for words that are specific to the EU or comprise a feminist-EU hybrid. Many of these words are bureaucratic translations of feminist concepts for practical use in an institutional context.

In terms of the thesis as a whole, this section is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, the publication of glossaries demonstrates low levels of knowledge surrounding gender issues amongst policy-makers. Moreover, many of the terms listed are foundation terms and concepts used to build policies and practices in gender equality. For instance, gender, as defined in table 1 is integral to understanding a number of policy practices and theoretical assumptions (i.e. gender mainstreaming, gender audit, gender blind, gender statistics, gender relations). Finally, as these terms are in everyday use by the European Commission and Irish policy-makers they represent a fairly representative and comprehensive sample of the vocabulary of gender equality policy-making currently in use. As such, they form an important conceptual foundation on which gender mainstreaming is based, and act as a reference point for the mainstream/feminist dialogue articulated in the thesis, thereby forming an important part of the interpretative framework of gender mainstreaming. The relevance of the vocabularies becomes more apparent as arguments about knowledge, language and power are made in the latter half of the thesis. The use of European Commission terms by Irish policy-makers also demonstrates how international organisations and institutions impact on domestic policy-making in specific

ways. The EU plays an important role as a facilitator, translator or inhibitor of ideas, which move from feminism to national governments, as demonstrated by the fact that Irish policy-makers used this glossary to create their own vocabulary of gender mainstreaming. Hoskyns (1994) differentiates between international and EU (at the time EC) influence in a way that is useful for conceptualising the development of gender mainstreaming as it moved through various non-state fora:

> '...the EC system is centrally involved in the regulation of international processes, in the ordering of different interests at international level, and in the aggregation of power between states. But it does this in ways that make it marginally easier for domestically organised groups to experience and become involved in transnational politics' (Hoskyns, 1994; 225).

These terms identified as part of the vocabulary of gender mainstreaming have been developed within feminist thought (True, 2003; 374). The following section examines how gender mainstreaming is informed by feminist theory.

3.3 Gender mainstreaming and feminist theory

Gender mainstreaming has been argued as applicable to everything from social movement theory (Mazey, 2000; 339; Pollack and Hafner-Burton, 2000; 432) to various forms of constructivism (Elgström, 2000; 457; Mazey, 2000; 338; Mazey, 2001; 11). This is mainly due to the fact that gender mainstreaming is an idea originated from a social movement

rather than a bureaucratic innovation.[70] Feminists such as Harding (1988) note that social movements allow people to imagine alternative realities; unconstrained by conformity, social movements can have insights that augment knowledge and improve observation of the social world (Millman in Harding, 1998; 183).

Such 'normative' feminist values have motivated research on gender identity and female under-representation,[71] which may have otherwise been dismissed as too difficult to quantify (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998; 889). Most gender mainstreaming authors conceive of gender in feminist terms. This section of the review includes a detailed analysis of the contribution of feminist theory in terms of conceptual tools and categories of analysis in efforts to understand gender mainstreaming. The remainder of the Chapter uses feminist theories of language, appropriation and bureaucracy to articulate the challenges and opportunities for gender mainstreaming, and to establish an insightful understanding of these processes.

Despite the criticisms already levelled at feminists currently writing about 'gender mainstreaming' this thesis argues that feminism provides the best theoretical framework for the study of 'gender mainstreaming'. The concepts, categories and methods of analysis developed by feminists theorising the international can be used to produce an analysis of 'mainstreaming' which is informed rather than biased by a feminist perspective.[72]

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[70] The idea of a 'bureaucratic innovation' was identified as an oxymoron by some policy-makers.

[71] Ground-breaking feminist studies in IR include Enloe, C. (1989) *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: making feminist sense of international politics* London : Pandora and Elshtain, J. B., (1995) *Women and War* Chicago : University of Chicago Press.

[72] The central difference between the feminism in Woodward's (2001) versus True's (2001) work relates to the philosophical evolution of feminism towards a more complex theory of social relations. '...because gender as an abstract universal is not a useful analytical category and because research has revealed a plethora of oppressions at work in productions of knowledge, feminist epistemology is emerging as a research program with multiple dimensions.' Alcoff,

Therefore, it is really a question of what type of feminism best elucidates a study of 'mainstreaming' as its origins and core concepts reveal it as essentially a feminist project:

> '...gender mainstreaming is clearly derived from constructionist feminist theory, which stresses the extent to which gender roles are socially constructed' (Mazey, 2001; 11).

Theorists such as Elshtain (1997) have shown that the articulation of the interests of a subjugated group, in this case women, is more difficult for a number of reasons. Fundamentally, the perspective of the subjugated group is by definition suffocated by that of the dominant group culture since the latter holds the apparatus of value-coding for the entire society.[73] Although the best articulators of the outlook of the dominated group are members of that group, because they have experienced oppression, oppression itself has also most likely tempered their ability to articulate their experience.[74] Given that having any voice would still mean having very few serious listeners, the subjugated group is forced to learn the language and ideas of the dominant group. The result is incoherent articulation of the perspective of the subjugated group, who are curtailed by having to use the crude concepts or inappropriate categories of the hegemonic perspective.

> 'One argument by feminists sensitive to language, for example, is that the presumably clear distinction between male-female, masculine-feminine, and so on, is not really so clear at all. This linguistic distinction may cover up real and

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L. and Potter, E. (1993) 'Introduction: When Feminisms Intersect Epistemology' in Alcoff, L. and Potter, E. (eds.) *Feminist Epistemologies* London: Routledge. pp. 3.

[73] Hartsock, Nancy C. M. 'The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism' in Harding, S. (1987) *Feminism and Methodology* Milton Keynes: Open University Press. Also, see Spivak, G. C. (1987) *In Other Worlds: essays in cultural politics* London: Metheun.

[74] This manifestation of the oppression is sometimes ruinous. For instance, Elshtain (1997) views the extremism of radical feminism as ultimately repressive. 'Repressive feminists, in theorising the life out of the world, provide powerful indirect evidence of the devastating results of a repression that has spread to thought itself' (Elshtain, 1997; 185).

important differences that fall through the net of received terms' (Elshtain, 1997; 55).

Thus, while the dominant group chooses only to be aware of its own viewpoint, the subjugated group understands both perspectives, but chooses an alternative to the dominant one. While it is more complicated and difficult to analyse the view of subjugated groups, it is also more creative and ultimately more productive for our understanding of complex social and political issues. A good example of the oppressed group's articulation problem is the Second Commission on the Status of Women, appointed by the Irish government in 1990.[75] The Commission's main task was to produce a report on the status of women in Irish society in light of submissions supplied by women's groups. The Report of the Commission, published in 1993, is a good example of the difficulties subjugated groups face. Forced to articulate all gender issues in Irish society at once and in one document, the Commission produced 211 recommendations on everything from abortion to rural transport. These recommendations were not offered with any timeline for action, nor were substantive modes of operationalising the goals identified. Rather, the Report of the Second Commission contained a large number of recommendations, sometimes mutually exclusive, some unconstitutional, others simply too insignificant to merit government policy-making. This manner is typical where the subjugated group voices its grievances according to a method and in a language that is acceptable to the dominant group. More often than not, the method and language used are not the best means to articulate these issues, as evident in the Second Commission. By employing Harding's arguments about social movements removing 'the covers and

[75] For a review of the Second Commission's Report see Galligan, et. al. *op. cit.* (2000)

blinders that obscure knowledge and observation' (Millman in Harding, 1988; 183) and Elshtain's argument that over-simplification in behaviourist methodologies excludes rich sources of information integral to understanding the political world,[76] the thesis argues for a holistic, normative interpretation of 'gender mainstreaming.' This approach throws up a series of complex questions. Why is gender mainstreaming often described as meaningless by policy-makers and non-feminists? How is gender mainstreaming informed by feminist theory? What, if any, is the theory of gender mainstreaming? Why is gender mainstreaming controversial within feminism? Some of these issues are explored in the remainder of the Chapter.

3.3.1 Feminist Knowledge as Divided Territory

The implementation of gender mainstreaming reveals divisions and disagreements within feminism, that feminists are not always comfortable about revealing to the mainstream. These divisions represent both a problem and an opportunity in terms of understanding gender mainstreaming. The problem lies in the fact that contesting definitions and interpretations of gender mainstreaming are essentially rooted in its theoretical origins within feminism; 'a heterogenous body of work' (Alcoff and Potter, 1993; 1). The opportunity lies in the fact that multiple conceptions of gender mainstreaming pave the way for multilateral feminist activism operating simultaneously at different junctures and

[76] 'The aim is to strip away the apparent complexities of political life and human action, to get rid of anything untidy, so that one might engage in a search for lawlikeness in political life (Elshtain, 1997; 18).

levels of the political process. For instance, liberal feminists may be happy to pursue a reformist mainstreaming strategy (Galligan, 1998) while radical feminists may prefer to maintain a radical voice at the margins of political processes (hooks, 2000). The debates between different strands of feminism are important in terms of understanding the challenges and opportunities for policy-makers and feminists arising from the introduction of gender mainstreaming.

As an articulation of feminist ideas, gender mainstreaming operates at the juncture between feminist theory and practice. Feminist literature and thought is important in an analysis of 'gender mainstreaming' because it can both illuminate and obscure 'gender mainstreaming.'[77] This paradox relates to the fact that while there are a large number of different 'feminisms' this is rarely recognised outside feminist thought.[78] It is crucial that theorising around 'gender mainstreaming' recognises this diversity as it immediately offers scholars a theoretical starting point from which to analyse the implementation process. For instance, differentiating between feminist standpoint and liberal feminist theory allows one to construct a very different concept of 'mainstreaming'. Hartsock, in her explanation of feminist standpoint theory, states that theory has repercussions for practice but also that practice has epistemological underpinnings and even impacts (Hartsock in Harding, 1988; 163). Meanwhile, Alvesson and Due Billing (1997) have defined liberal feminism as aiming at gender equality without actually seriously addressing or questioning any aspect of society other than the disadvantage of women

[77] For instance, feminist ideas surrounding the social construction of gender (Peterson and Runyan, 1992b) are key to explaining 'gender mainstreaming' but some feminists portray mainstreaming as a sell out (Zalewski, 2002).

[78] '...Western feminist discourse and political practice is neither singular nor homogenous in its goals, interests and analyses' (Mohanty, 1991; 52).

(Alvesson and Due Billing, 1997; 22). It is a more incremental approach to equality as it ignores other possible roots of oppression. Gender mainstreaming is an experiment that allows one to view the interaction of feminist theory and practice and the theory and practice of the mainstream that feminism seeks to penetrate. Hartsock's work on feminist standpoint (in Harding, 1988) provides a theoretical clarification of the impasse faced by feminists in the multiple role of theorist, activist (and often implementor).[79]

> 'The concept of a standpoint structures epistemology in a particular way. Rather than a simple dualism, it posits a duality of levels of reality, of which the deeper level or essence both includes and explains the 'surface' or appearance, and indicates the logic by means of which the appearance inverts and distorts reality' (Hartsock in Harding, 1988; 159).

This complexity is well articulated by Baden and Goetz (1997) in their study of the multiplicity of discourses around gender at the UN conference in Beijing in 1995.[80] Baden and Goetz's(1997) study offers an articulate and balanced summary of the central arguments within feminism in relation to international gender norms. This work defines academic and activist boundaries, clarifying different roles of various members of an epistemic community, within the general normative framework of gender equality in preparation for the Beijing conference.

> 'As feminist researchers we felt it important to... build alliances with activists and campaigners...This proved challenging in a number of ways. Specifically, it

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[79] This relates back to the 'capture' of gender mainstreaming by feminist gender experts evident in the work of Verloo (2001) and Woodward (1999; 2001), in their role as members of an epistemic community.

[80] Baden, S. and Goetz, A. (1997) 'Who Needs [Sex] When You Can Have [Gender]?: Conflicting Discourses on Gender at Beijing' *Feminist Review* No. 56, Summer 1997.

> highlighted our distance from the language used in the lobbying process, in both its conceptual underpinnings and style: our proclivity for academic rigour, complexity and critique seemed at times to be in direct opposition to the demands of consensus building, political utility and direct campaigning messages' (Baden and Goetz, 1997; 8).

What is most powerful about Baden and Goetz's work is its ability to analyse a feminist project in a critical way. In essence, their work illustrates the dexterity of feminism in its ability to understand and articulate the perspective of both dominant and subjugated groups.

So, this study considers knowledge-building mechanisms in establishing the transformative capacity of gender mainstreaming as a policy tool. Essentially, gender mainstreaming is an international norm, constructed on feminist ideas about female emancipation and gender equality. However, the nature of these assumptions varies according to the feminist epistemological perspective taken.[81] Implicit assumptions also vary according to the political ideologies and perspectives with which feminism co-exists. Therefore, international gender norms must first gain a foothold with local feminists, whose knowledge of gender is vital to the implementation of mainstreaming strategies.

[81] For an introduction to feminist epistemology see: Browning Cole, E. (1993) *Philosophy and Feminist Criticism: an introduction* New York: Paragon. For a more thorough discussion of conflicting feminist epistemologies such as feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint and feminist postmodernism see Harding, S. (ed.) (1987) *Feminism and Methodology: Social Science Issues* Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

In this context I argue it is impossible to assess feminism in the abstract. Feminist values always operate within or beside another conception of political theory. This is clearly articulated by Grant (1993; 1) in her discussion of *'hyphenated feminism.'*

> 'There is no one feminist theory. Rather, feminist theory is multicentred and undefinable. It is divided according to its attachment to one or another of several male theories whose terms it has attempted to appropriate and whose male-biased assumptions it has attempted to mitigate...it has left us with a feminist theory that understands itself to be a kind of bandage on the basically misogynist canon of Western political and social philosophy' (Grant, 1993; 1).

In the Irish case, feminist politics has developed as part of a liberal movement struggling to articulate an alternative to a highly conservative status quo. Given little to choose from, Irish modernizers chose liberal over clerical politics (Gallagher, in Coakley and Gallagher, 1999; 92-3), unaware of the limitations of a liberal conception of gender equality. The freedom and equality expected from 1970s liberal ideals resulted in little substantive change, which in turn precipitated the introduction of gender mainstreaming. These issues are elaborated in Chapter 6. The following section reviews the literature examining the relationship between feminism and bureaucracy, particularly how priorities of bureaucracy such as performance management, value for money, reproduction of incumbent positioning and a general unwillingness to change amongst bureaucrats affect the development of feminist policy-making.

3.3.2 Femocrats and Bureaucracy

Given the dependency of gender mainstreaming on bureaucracy for its survival, it was thought that a review of the literature on feminism and bureaucracy would provide some context as to where and when gender mainstreaming might be hindered for ideological reasons, or as a result of bureaucratic inertia.[82] Most of the literature on feminism and bureaucracy stems from trials with gender mainstreaming's predecessors, (women in development and later gender and development) (Goetz, 1997; Moser, 1993), and in the experience of the Australian 'femocratic experiment' of the 1970s (Eisenstein, 1996, *xi*). As stated earlier, the idea of femocrats originated in Australia:

> 'femocrats were senior public servants who owed their positions to pressure from the organized women's movement. The femocratic strategy rested on a gender analysis holding that governments were run by and for men and that where government policy dealt with women, whether in taxation, welfare, education, employment, it reinforced traditional gender roles. The femocrat's job was to change this, by delivering policy changes that advanced women's interests' (Eisenstein, 1996; *xii*).

The experiences of femocrats and development specialists suggest that language and macro-political contexts are important in determining the success of gender policies. According to this literature, bureaucratic politics can be seen as both an obstacle and an aid to gender mainstreaming. Bureaucratic resistance to change is an obstacle:

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[82] In general, the literature on gender mainstreaming to date is not concerned with the role of bureaucratic politics in facilitating or hindering gender mainstreaming. Most likely, this is due to the fact that gender mainstreaming has not had sufficient time to interact with bureaucracy for meaningful conclusions to be reached. I predict, however, that the role of bureaucratic politics in the development of gender mainstreaming will be a concern of future research.

> 'the operation of the public service was about maintenance of an existing order, about protecting ministers, about ensuring that certain formalities were followed... This structure did not have an easy point of entry for units whose whole purpose was wide-reaching change and which were prepared to use unorthodox means to reach those ends' (Chesterton, quoted in Eisenstein, 1996; 171).

Likewise, Goetz (1997) argues that examining institutions

> 'illuminates the gendered sub-texts of apparently neutral organising structures, practices, and ideologies, to help explain why these prove so resistant to women and their interests' (Goetz, 1997; 17).

Feminists had, however, begun to recognise how bureaucratic mechanisms could be used to offset the excesses of patriarchal power. Reid, the first Australian Women's Adviser,[83] recognised how feminist policy could 'bring women to the threshold' (Eisenstein, 1996; 21) by ensuring they had basic rights and access to institutions and opportunities. Once at the threshold, a more 'radical restructuring' of society and politics was possible:

> 'The most difficult challenge was to identify the required revolutionary changes, the changes over and above those which could bring women to the threshold of choice, which could lead to the structural changes rather than merely reinforcing and bolstering the present structure' (Reid, 1987; 15 quoted in Eisenstein, 1996; 22).

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[83] Reid, a feminist activist with a background in feminist philosophy used her intellectual powers to design innovative ways of using bureaucracy to empower women. As such, she was the embodiment of intellectual and real world feminism, demonstrating how the two can be mutually re-enforcing and beneficial. See Eisenstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-27.

Reid's hopes echo those of contemporary femocrats, who envisage a radical future for gender mainstreaming.[84] This literature also reveals the central paradox of femocracy (like that of gender mainstreaming), as an internal feminist critique of established bureaucracy, executed according to the principles of New Public Management.

Eisenstein (1996) and Goetz (1998) both argue that national political context influences the development of gender policy (Eisenstein, 1996; Goetz, 1997). Also, they determine that bureaucratic resistance is related to the broader political context. If gender mainstreaming is in tune with broader governmental aims it is less likely to stall in the bureaucracy.[85] Language, patriarchy and ideology interact with bureaucratic culture and the macro-political context to determine success levels for feminist policy (Goetz, 1997; Eisenstein, 1996; del Rosario in Goetz, 1997).

On macro-political context, Eisenstein (1996) recognises the importance of the ideological leaning of prevailing political parties in providing necessary preconditions for femocracy (Eisenstein, 1996; *xv*). She also recognises how legitimating feminist aims is linked to patriarchal undercurrents and obstacles that were recognised by senior politicians in the Australian case:

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[84] 'The purpose of mainstreaming is to alter the existing social and political order that leads to gendered outcomes' (True and Mintrom, 2001; 33).

[85] For instance, the case study (Chapters 5 and 6) reveals successes for gender policy around labour market and childcare issues. See Moser's (1989, quoted in Goetz, 1997) five-part typology of interpretations of WID policy, 'welfare,' 'equity,' 'anti-poverty,' 'efficiency,' and 'empowerment' for an in-depth discussion of how different institutional contexts lead to very different outcomes for gender policy.

> 'Prime ministers personally launched special programmes for women in language that acknowledged the patriarchal structures preventing women's economic, political, and cultural equality' (Eisenstein, 1996; *xiii*).

This reportage of the experiences of Australian femocrats is important as it highlights the complexity of the role of feminist policy-makers as both insider and outsider,[86] critic and designer of present and future gender equality policy.

Language features as a possible mode to emancipation in Eisenstein's research:

> 'In the late sixties, early seventies, women were discovering their language, they were articulating, naming, demanding, testing the limits' (O'Keeffe in Eisenstein, 1996; 198).

But language also features as an indicator of masculinism (within bureaucracy). Both Goetz (1998) and Eisenstein (1996) identify ideological and patriarchal bias in the language used by bureaucrats. Eisenstein reports how femocrats used masculine language of bureaucracy to do their work, but were aware of

> 'their symbolic weight as expressions of male power, temporarily usurped for feminist purposes' (Eisenstein, 1996; 84).

Most importantly, Eisenstein (1996; 3) links the 'Australian settlement' with patriarchy; a social contract conceptualised by Carole Pateman as a concealed sexual contract,

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[86] Eisenstein (1996; 210) refers to Steinberg's argument that the 'insider' is constrained by institutional structures, while the 'outsider's' lack of knowledge of internal structures and practices leads to poor communication and a weak political bargaining position.

'marriage, which protected the patriarchal power of fathers and husbands within the family' (Eisenstein, 1996; 10).

More profound obstacles recognised by Australian femocrats include patriarchal assumptions, which constitute the foundations of masculinised bureaucracy. For instance, on affirmative action one of Eisenstein's respondents remarked:

> 'It is one thing for a Labor government to bring it in as legislation. It is another to get the male decision makers to actually build that into their consciousness' (O'Connor quoted in Eisenstein, 1996; 181).

In the final analysis, patriarchy, particularly its comfortable co-habitation with the ideology of economic rationalism in the 1980s, allowed for the inevitable regression when femocrats were replaced with management school graduates:

> 'economic rationalism was not a rational stance. It was an ideological position that gave primacy to market interests over human needs. In Australia, as in other countries, the impact of neo-liberalism was to cut the public sector and expect women to pick up the slack in the private sphere, as social services diminish' (Eisenstein, 1996; 196).

In fact, ideological questions are at the core of the feminist debate: is mainstreaming an internal challenge to political power structures or merely feminist co-option by neo-liberal government? Eisenstein identifies the centrality of this debate throughout her discussion of the Australian femocracy:

> 'The controversy was linked to the ideological implications of the decision to enter the state as a feminist: co-optation by the state? Reform versus revolution? Hierarchy versus collective, non-hierarchical decision making? The femocratic strategy evoked all of these issues, debated within the women's movement for more than two decades, and linked to similar arguments in the New and old Left, reaching back to the beginnings of socialist theory and practice (Eisenstein, 1996; 67).

Ideology is the foundation stone on which political systems are made. Ideology also underpins the reasons why feminists and bureaucracy fail or succeed to integrate and transform. Informed by pervading ideology, macro-political issues determined the agenda:

> 'Within the highly structured political system of a capitalist democracy like Australia's, some things were seen (or presented, or indeed experienced) as possible or "doable" and other things as impossible' (Eisenstein, 1996; 169).

Eisenstein found that government often adopt policy due to a 'coincidence of interests' (Draper, 1991; 324 quoted in Eisenstein, 1996; 181) with sectional interests, rather than because of any conviction to alleviate problems for a particular group. She concludes that all of these problems are perhaps related to a larger roadblock:

> 'Perhaps the ultimate roadblock was the fundamental opposition between the long-range goals of feminism and those of the capitalist state' (Eisenstein, 1996; 182).

The state became identified as

> 'a patriarchal structure whose main function was the protection of the status quo' (Eisenstein, 1996; 183).

Meanwhile, Goetz (1997; 6) recognises that institutions are socially constructed *human* creations. Humanising bureaucracy allows Goetz (1997; 6) to clarify when 'technical' matters are used as an excuse to

> 'downplay the empowerment-related-objectives of programmes' (Goetz, 1997; 6).

Eisenstein (1996) recognises the

> 'imposition of performance indicators by which a bureaucrat's work is assessed' (Eisenstein, 1996; 182)

as one of the key challenges to building feminist policy, introduced with the rise of neo-liberalism in Australia in the 1980s (Eisenstein, 1996; 186). In the Australian case, the demands of the neo-liberal state meant that femocrats were ever more split on how they addressed feminist and mainstream audiences, using separate languages and arguments depending on whom they were addressing:

> 'You have to use a different language and different process' (L'Orange quoted in Eisenstein, 1996; 188).

This split stemmed from another 'roadblock' to femocratic success, bureaucratic cultures, which:

> 'tended to put pressure on the people in them to conform to the dominant values and culture, rather than to respond to diversity by changing' (Eisenstein, 1996; 171).

Bureaucratic hostility to women's units during the femocratic era led to a policy of self-ghettoisation in order to survive.

> 'We ghettoised ourselves. We found the Public Service so unpleasant that we huddled in together with our heads down...talking and talking and talking and swapping and stroking each other and going in for grooming behaviour and ...maintaining ourselves really in the face of this incredibly hostile environment' (McCulloch in Eisenstein, 1996; 71).

In this environment, some pragmatic idealism was needed in order to make the bureaucratic method of changing the world work (Eisenstein, 1996; 77). Cynics within feminism could not see how such an approach could lead to anything other than co-optation. A gap between intellectual feminists and femocrats emerged. Academic feminists often assumed that feminists who chose to work within governmental power structures were unaware of the risks of appropriation they were taking. Femocrats agreed that progress was to be slow, but argued that radical re-structuring could begin on the inside. This disagreement demonstrated a general lack of understanding amongst intellectuals of the radical future femocrats envisaged for their strategy.

> 'At least some of my cohort of femocrats, then, saw themselves as radicals, their decision to enter the bureaucracy was a strategic move, predicated on the notion

that at least some kinds of change would be possible using this vehicle' (Eisenstein, 1996; 78).

Eisenstein (1996; 82) described the radical core of the femocratic strategy, in terms which resonate with contemporary articulations of the radical future of gender mainstreaming:[87]

> 'In a maneuver I have termed "feminist judo," femocrats sought to use the capitalist patriarchal state against itself, by providing women with the means to end their situation of economic and sexual dependence' (Eisenstein, 1996; 82).

Interestingly, "mainstreaming"[88] was seen as a way of clearing out the femocrats, under the climate of new managerialism. For Australian feminists, mainstreaming heralded the end of the femocracy, to be replaced with objective managerialism, performance indicators and the downgrading of women from a sectional to a special interest.

> 'Some cynical opponents of specialized units in the bureaucracy argued for "mainstreaming" as a strategy for getting rid of femocrats altogether' (Eisenstein, 1996; 197).

Central to Eisenstein's (1996; 192) critique of 'mainstreaming' was the agreement between method and ideology. Feminist ideology and new managerial mechanisms (namely, performance measurement) were not easily compatible.[89] The construction of

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[87] 'The trick is carried out through the insertion of 'tools' like Trojan horses inside the policy process, using 'formal rationality' to reveal gender related negotiations' (Woodward, 2001; 133).

[88] Though the meaning of "mainstreaming" is never explicitly stated, Eisenstein's (1996) reference to performance indicators and budget management suggests something similar to gender mainstreaming as that found currently in the Republic of Ireland.

[89] Performance indicators, though useful in some contexts, particularly in relation to ascertaining where best to channel public funding, have encountered problems when applied to gender equality policies, not least because the construction of meaningful and useful indicators of progress on gender equality requires a)

performance indicators, though possible, de-politicised policy, removing any possibility of radical restructuring:

> 'Draper argued that ultimately it was not possible to divorce the techniques from the broader ideology. She concluded that 'as far as I'm concerned, you can have a good corporate management plan for a concentration camp' (Eisenstein, 1996; 192).

Neither Eisenstein (1997) nor Del Rosario (in Goetz, 1997) are, however, completely dismissive of mainstreaming. Del Rosario (in Goetz, 1997; 87) notes that female bureaucrats have used governmental enthusiasm for mainstreaming to promote women's interests. Likewise, Eisenstein (1996; 213) recognises the considerable achievements of femocrats in institutionalising and ultimately legitimating feminist ideas in mainstream institutions. This literature would seem to suggest that

> 'the barrier of state masculinism is not impenetrable' (del Rosario in Goetz, 1997; 87).

The following section discusses the possibility of harnessing gender mainstreaming as a powerful, internally positioned critique of established bureaucracy.

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knowledge of what levels of gender equality are presently at and; 2) individuals who have the expertise to devise means of developing indicators which use relevant and useful criteria against which to benchmark progress. For a full discussion of performance indicators see Galligan, (2000) *op. cit.,*

3.4 Conclusion: an opportunity for internal feminist critique of mainstream policy-making.

There are a variety of feminisms at work in the analysis of mainstreaming. Some have greater success in elucidating the project than others. This Chapter concludes that gender mainstreaming reveals as much about feminism as feminism reveals about gender mainstreaming. In analysing the literature relevant to gender mainstreaming, this Chapter establishes that the significant goal of this project is to offer an account of feminist practice and theory that explains how they interact together and with mainstream bureaucracy. To what extent does gender mainstreaming offer an opportunity for feminists to articulate a coherent critique of established policies? This concluding section confirms the centrality of feminism to establishing the circumstances under which such a critique can be undertaken.

True's work is decisive because when contrasted with earlier work on 'gender mainstreaming' (Woodward, 1999; 2001; Verloo, 2001; Mossink, 2001) it reveals that a perspective's ability to adequately explain social and political phenomena is closely tied to its political underpinnings.[90] Theorists within feminism have recognised this for some time. Elshtain (1997; 15) and Whitworth (1997; 3) state that all political inquiry takes place within a particular context. Many political scientists involved in the everyday work of empirical enquiry fail to note that their work is based on a number of basic assumptions that ultimately determine what aspect of social life they decide to study, what questions they ask, and the results they generate.

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[90] 'A distinguishing characteristic of women's studies and other critical social theories is their normative approach and combination of research, study and activism' (Karl, 1995; 47). This is reflected in the literature by 'gender experts.'

> 'Contemporary political scientists, for the most part, are unaware of the philosophical foundations of their enterprise and thus cannot even consider the contestable assumptions concerning human nature imbedded within their frameworks of analysis' (Elshtain, 1997; 15).

The result is that some political scientists see feminism as merely biased/activist, rather than as a valid model for understanding the political and social world that has its own epistemology and methodology (Randall, 1991; 513). Positivist epistemological assumptions value the neutral and objective, while feminist epistemology is openly normative (Elshtain, 1997; 19). As stated earlier, the extent to which the conceptual bias impedes political change was expressed by the United Nations as early as 1986, in relation to creating a new, workable agenda for the pursuits of gender equality:

> 'Women's studies should be developed to reformulate the current models influencing the constitution of knowledge and sustaining a value system that reinforces inequality.' (1986; 33).

In relation to this project I argue that the ideas and concepts of 'gender mainstreaming' are based in a feminist philosophy that views the world on the basis of its exclusions and androcentric bias.

> 'The principle intellectual justification for gender mainstreaming rests upon a feminist critique of liberal democracy' (Mazey, 2001; 9).[91]

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[91] This contention most clearly links the significance of gender mainstreaming for feminism to the utility of analysing the Irish case. This argument is clearly elaborated in Chapters 5 and 6.

Once the normative underpinnings of 'gender mainstreaming' are located within the feminist project a number of issues concerning methodology and analysis become clear. Firstly, the difficulties documented by those assessing the implementation of

> 'gender mainstreaming can be traced to the philosophical basis of mainstreaming policy placing it in contrast to, rather than in cooperation with, existing policy priorities (True, 2001; 3).

This literature therefore recognises that the need for 'gender mainstreaming' rests in the blanket exclusion of women from decision-making processes and is therefore as much a political as a bureaucratic project

> 'the social relations involved in public administration cannot be settled just by getting a structural blueprint – in the end, it is a matter of political struggle' (Goetz, 1995; 10).

At least in policy terms, gender mainstreaming is a start in re-conceptualising policy in favour of a feminist alternative. As such, it represents a concrete opportunity for feminists to articulate a coherent alternative to established policy-making. Genuine (as opposed to superficial) alternatives will be based on a critique of the assumptions and beliefs underlying mainstream policy practice. In many instances, this challenge requires a rejection of established practices and replacement with feminist alternatives:

> 'Feminist scholars point out that gender issues will only be mainstreamed in global policy when gender issues are given substantive meaning in specific social contexts and policy-making processes' (True, 2003; 376).

This review of the literature has demonstrated that rather than attacking the spirit of gender mainstreaming, effective research will begin by disassembling the political categories (within and outside feminism) that are responsible for its problems. This approach confronts the categories not the subjects (i.e. fellow feminists) that are oppressive of feminist knowledge. To date, the work of True (2001; 2003) and von Braunmühl (in Braig and Wölte, 2002) represents the potential to develop a version of gender mainstreaming that amounts to a profound challenge to gendered policy-making. Gender mainstreaming is not anti-feminist, but it does require that we start with a broadly liberal-institutional methodology (Woodward, 2003; True, 2003). Central to challenging established gender hierarchies is recognising the dynamic of power that operates via agenda-setting, resource and budget allocation in everyday policy-making. This dynamic must be identified and incorporated into analyses of gender mainstreaming. Once the complex association between challenge and compromise at the heart of gender mainstreaming is identified, real progress can be made in terms of developing it intellectually and in the 'real world' (Mazey, 2000). Even Woodward (1999) recognises that there are potential benefits to gender mainstreaming:

> 'Gender mainstreaming is fashionable but it is not an end in itself – the aim is gender equality. If we can get closer by using these tools, words and methods, then perhaps it is worth the compromise that speaking the language of power entails' (Woodward, 1999; 142).

This Chapter has shown that proponents of gender mainstreaming argue that the policy attacks gender hierarchies from the inside (True, 2001; 2003; Beveridge, et. al., 2000;

Mazey, 2000). The Chapter also establishes the centrality of feminist theorists and practitioners to the mainstreaming project. While Chapter 2 identified feminism as an epistemic community with control over the knowledge necessary to introduce gender mainstreaming, this Chapter provided a discussion of how feminist theory has influenced the development of gender mainstreaming thus far. In this way, the Chapter outlines a number of ways in which feminism and gender mainstreaming are mutually relevant. Not least, planting 'femocrats' in the bureaucracy forces dialogue between feminists and mainstream policy-makers. Therefore, gender mainstreaming provides a voice for feminist goals within policy-making institutions. How this voice sounds to policy-making and governmental audiences says much about the status of feminist knowledge and the ability of feminists to communicate within and outside the feminist community. Bearing this in mind, the thesis proposes gender mainstreaming as an opportunity for feminism to articulate its aims to a wider (mainstream) audience. These issues are addressed in Chapter seven. The next challenge is to develop a methodology capable of assessing a complex and challenging policy like gender mainstreaming.

PART TWO: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter Four. Qualitative Substance and Quantitative Data.

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter provides an explicit justification for the methodology chosen for the thesis. The research design and methods for gathering and analysing the data are detailed. The Chapter argues that while statistics on female representation and gender are useful in terms of providing a snapshot of how gender determines social and political hierarchies, statistics cannot offer a substantive explanation of the underlying assumptions that produce observable gender inequalities.

Decisions about methodology were based on previous research completed as a member of a team charged with developing quantitative indicators of gender equality for the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in the Republic of Ireland in 1999-2000. This research effectively served as a pilot study, and as such it is explicitly included in the final research design. A number of important observations were made in the 1999-2000 research. Firstly, the research revealed that gender mainstreaming offered a valuable opportunity for Irish feminism in theory and practice. However, it also demonstrated that its vague articulation meant gender mainstreaming would most likely be adjusted to suit prevailing ideologies in the Irish political culture.[92] Given the absence of both data and

[92] Much as Eisenstein (1996) found that the success of femocracy was in part due to Australian social liberalism, with the emphasis on the social compact, in the Republic of Ireland, gender mainstreaming is constrained by the ideology of neo-liberalism. This argument is developed in Chapters 5 and 6. 'Neoliberalism is a political philosophy and a political-

knowledge about gender in the Irish policy-making system (Barry, 2000; 5), it could prove difficult to explain the persistence of substantive gender inequality despite various positive action measures with the use of surveys, questionnaires or other quantitative methods. The gathering of a large amount of data at a fairly superficial level would not contribute to our understanding of the status of gender as an issue in Irish policy-making in any substantive way. A similar argument is expressed by Barry (2000; 5-6), a prominent feminist and social economist who undertook research on the behalf of the Equality Authority (Irish government equality agency) to establish why there is a lack of gender disaggregated statistics; why it was important to build a statistical picture of how gender affects participation rates across Irish society; and to propose a framework by which a comprehensive gender disaggregated statistical database could be established. Barry (2000; 2) states that data is necessary in order to establish the baseline positions, monitor change and to establish trends over time in relation to equality. This argument justifies the need for a gender-disaggregated statistical database on a national level. Barry (2000) is concerned, however, that the basis on which these statistics are gathered is extremely influential in terms of their potential to be revelatory. Assumptions made in the building of a statistical database influence what is reported, what is deemed relevant and what is omitted. As such, she argues, it is important to include organisations, often operating outside mainstream policy-making bodies in the data gathering process as voluntary and community based organisations 'often have a direct knowledge of the

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economic movement beginning in the 1960s, and increasingly prominent since the 1980s, that de-emphasises or rejects government intervention in the economy, focusing instead on achieving progress and even social justice by more free market methods, especially an emphasis on economic growth, as measured by changes in Gross Domestic Product. It is exemplified in the adminstration efforts of Margaret Thatcher and to a lesser extent Tony Blair of the United Kingdom' (at http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/neoliberalism). One could add, Bertie Ahern and the Fianna Fail party in the Republic of Ireland. See Kirby, P., Gibbons, L. and Cronin, M. (2002) *Reinventing Ireland: culture, society and global economy* London: Pluto for a discussion of the Celtic Tiger as a neoliberal economic construct.

situation of specific actors of the population, particularly in regard to the concrete implementation of the policy' (Barry, 2000; 3). The introduction of gender mainstreaming offers an opportunity to develop policy (and collect data) based on arguments emanating from women's movements and feminist organisations via the Platform for Action.

Therefore, rather than counting how many more women were represented in the labour market, parliament or higher income brackets, as a result of gender mainstreaming policies, the thesis seeks to ascertain changes in gender norms at the national level emanating from the introduction of a global policy of feminist critique in mainstream bureaucracy. The thesis seeks to produce an in-depth study of gender equality policy in the Republic of Ireland as the advent of gender mainstreaming seemed to offer a perfect opportunity for review of Irish gender equality policy-making. The Chapter concludes that the adoption of gender mainstreaming as an instrument for gender equality policy development and assessment in the Republic of Ireland in 1996, and the process leading to its application, demonstrates the pro-active adoption of international norms by relevant domestic actors.

4.2 The Research Design

As stated earlier, my work on gender mainstreaming began when I worked as part of a team asked to develop performance indicators for gender equality by the Irish government

in 1999. Indicators had entered Irish policy-making through the influence of international organisations such as the UN and the EU.[93] The Irish government were preparing for the implementation of 'gender mainstreaming.' Our report aimed to establish the achievements and failures of gender equality policy in Ireland to date, in order to carve out a niche for a new 'mainstreaming' agenda. A more cynical interpretation argued that this report was commissioned to provide camouflage for lack of progress on gender equality by the Irish government when they attended the Beijing+5 meeting in New York, 2000.[94] In any case,

> 'indicators are statistical information chosen specifically to shed light on a particular economic, demographic or social problem or question' (Galligan et.al., 2000; 50).

In the 1999-2000 project, indicators were designed to provide benchmarks of gender equality. The idea was that once quantified benchmarks are established it is possible to gauge whether gender equality policies are having gender equal effects.

It became apparent while working on this project that the knowledge base on which the indicators were to be built could not conceive of gender as a relational category, in the sense that the activities of one social group impact on the status and activities of another.[95] For instance, the idea to include a satellite budget in order to assess the impact of men and

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[93] While indicators had become synonymous with 'progress' on gender equality from the 1980s, Australian femocrats (Eisenstein, 1996) identified their proliferation as part of a move towards new managerialism rather than as a concern with improving gender equality standards. However, the literature on gender mainstreaming has yet to explicitly identify the extent to which the tools of neo-liberal governance counteract the potential of gender mainstreaming to be anything other than 'integrationist' (Bhatta, 2001; 22).

[94] In conversation with policy consultant January 2000.

[95] This paper seeks to build on Peterson's powerful argument for the interpretation of gender as a 'relational not oppositional construct' (Peterson, 1992; 194) in an effort to move beyond constrictive gender binaries.

women on GDP in terms of paid and unpaid work was deemed untenable by policy-makers.[96] At the time, there was no data on female participation available.[97] It was not possible to 'measure' whether women were becoming 'equal'. This was essentially due to the fact that conceptions of equality promoted within the Irish bureaucracy subscribed to a narrow definition based on the ideals of liberal individualism.[98]

> '...in insisting on equality as something we claim *despite* all differences, women have been encouraged to deny aspects of themselves and to conform to some unitary norm' (Phillips in Barrett and Phillips, 1992; 11).

As data on gender is a necessary pre-requisite in the construction of performance indicators, the project team spent an amount of time counting women. How many women participate in the labour force? How many women serve in the army? How many women hold senior decision-making positions in companies, organizations and state bureaucracies?[99] These were the kind of questions posed during the construction of indicators. While these questions were important to the job in hand, they revealed that we were not required to question gendered structures and hierarchies, but rather to add women to established structures. This is hardly surprising given that we were writing a government report. The questions posed did reveal that Irish women were not participating as successfully as men, if one is to gauge success according to patriarchal

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[96] That is, policy-makers felt that the government of the day would never agree to the publication of a satellite budget.

[97] Lack of reporting around female productive work is identified as problematic in many studies of mainstreaming (Bhatta, 2001; Goetz, 1997). In the Republic of Ireland, reporting has improved immeasurably through the work of the NDP Gender Equality Unit at the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform since 1999.

[98] A full discussion of liberalism in an Irish context is provided in Chapter 5.

[99] Answers to all of these questions are now available at www.ndpgenderequality.ie

concepts of power, prestige, hierarchy and wealth.[100] The Irish conception of equality left no room to imagine a community of individuals who enjoyed a level of flexibility that combined family life with public participation. In terms of advancing feminist goals, who is more successful - the married parent of three in middle management or the childless unmarried female CEO? The failure of our team to produce satisfactory quantifiable indicators of 'gender equality' led me to ask questions about the kind of equality on which we had founded our benchmarks. It became apparent that there was nothing wrong with the spirit of what the Irish government was trying to achieve, *per se*. The problem was based on the fundamentally restricted premises (essentially liberal individualism) on which our work to achieve 'equality' was based. If the purpose of gender equality policy is to add women to established political structures, and these structures are founded on a set of principles that leave no room for differential experiences and subject positions, then established political and social institutions will unconsciously produce obstacles to full and equal participation for all members. A classic example in the Irish case is the representation of women in decision-making.

Women's domestic obligations, particularly caring for offspring, are so deeply ingrained in the political culture that equality of opportunity is rendered impotent in a climate where abortion is illegal, state childcare is an oddity, and culturally mothers are still expected to be primary care-givers in the domestic sphere. Such obstacles were identified in a government study into gendered career progressions in the Irish civil service:

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[100] The literature on feminism and bureaucracy (Eisenstein, 1996) and on gender and development (Goetz, 1997; del Rosario in Goetz, 1997) identifies how patriarchal systems operate to produce systematic bias. 'The socially constructed and gendered split between 'public' and 'private' is then deeply reinforced – institutionalised – through the formation of social networks or shared understandings and conventions of exclusion and inclusion, justified ideologically, which privilege the participation of the particular social group that has freed itself from reproductive work' (Goetz, 1997; 13).

> 'While not necessarily endorsing the view, discussants referred to the societal belief that it is a married woman's role to be the primary homemaker and carer. This ideology prevailed not only in Ireland but also in many EU countries, right up to the 1970s and 1980s, and is still held strongly by many men and women. Added to the lack of childcare facilities and an unsympathetic work environment, such thinking forces some women to adjust their career aspirations downwards' (Humphreys, Drew and Murphy, 1999; 163-164).

There is little doubt from the Irish case that a liberal democratic system, utilizing equal opportunity policies, fails to compensate for obstructions derived from identities ascribed cultural status outside the conception of citizens as individuals equal under the law.[101] Given this background it became apparent that operating beyond a liberal individualist framework of equality would produce more challenging questions. Had our study sought to build feminist knowledge we would have asked more challenging questions. Why do labour force statistics only account for paid work? Why is it necessary to build armies rather than peace programmes? How do hierarchies in organizations conspire to concentrate wealth and power amongst white, middle class men? How can we use feminist conceptions of the world to re-distribute power?

The second obstacle to producing indicators was rooted in the methodology our project used. Our project set out to establish which recommendations of the Second Commission

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[101] For Irish women, the freedom following liberalisation in the 1970s was conditional on maintaining patriarchal precepts regarding the sexual division of labour. Patriarchy sat all too comfortably with the 'free' market whose success, though never acknowledged, was dependent on the contribution of unpaid female labour in the domestic sphere. Women's inability to escape their culturally ascribed role as unpaid mother/carer made it difficult for them to access opportunities in the public sphere.

on the Status of Women (1993)[102] were still outstanding; to develop quantitative benchmarks (indicators) for achieving gender equality according to the twelve critical areas of concern outlined in the Platform for Action.[103] We also had a remit to propose a system for compiling gender-disaggregated data and to

> 'advise on an institutional framework for monitoring gender equality' (Galligan et.al., 2000; 15).

Our main task was to gather empirical evidence quantifying the status of Irish women. The empiricist values of objectivity and numerical abstraction sit well with the liberal conception of equality popular in Irish political culture (Gallagher in Coakley and Gallagher, 1999; 94). Our project set out to establish an objective measure for the advancement of women in the Republic of Ireland. This proved difficult since public statistics had never been gathered with the consideration of gender.

> 'When the Equal Pay legislation was brought in in the 1970s, the IDA started gathering statistics about women and men. But then they were told (by the govt) that that was not in the spirit of the new legislation and that they should stop gathering statistics on gender' (Author Interview; R6, July, 2002, Q2; 1).

The result was that statistics gathered had unconsciously treated male activities as the norm. Many of the activities performed by women were never counted. This gave the appearance of men being the sole contributors to economic wealth in Irish society. Though unconscious of it at the time, our team was encouraged to use a similar research

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[102] As mentioned earlier, the Second Commission on the Status of Women (1993), (the First Commission was published in 1970), sponsored by government, comprised a committee representing women's organizations in all walks of life. The task of the Commission was to produce a recommendation to improve the position of women in Irish society in politics.

[103] The twelve critical areas of concern include poverty, education, health, violence, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, the media, the environment, the girl-child (Galligan et.al., 2000; 3).

methodology to study Irish gender equality policy. Although our study highlighted the disadvantaged status of women in Irish society, it was precisely because it adopted a liberal feminist perspective that it did not have the means to articulate why the liberal legislative agenda failed to improve the status of Irish women.[104]

The objective of revealing more dimensions of gender relations and policy in Ireland than the number of Irish women participating in public life had significant methodological implications for my subsequent PhD research. How could the qualitative impact of gender mainstreaming on mainstream bureaucracy be gauged? It was necessary to devise some qualitative method of ascertaining why gender mainstreaming was introduced in the Republic of Ireland and what kind of changes it precipitated for Irish gender equality policy. Given the fact that one of the few areas of agreement surrounding gender mainstreaming was that it was vague and indeterminate (Chapter 2), the project began to assess the language of gender mainstreaming and how it reflected norm changes regarding gender equality. What was communicated to policy-makers via the medium of gender mainstreaming policy-making documents, training, advisors and femocrats? As attitudes underpin behaviours, the research became concerned with attitudes towards gender roles within and beyond the bureaucracy. How are ideas and attitudes about gender formed? This development drew on the work of a wide range of feminist perspectives (hooks, 2000; Elshtain, 1997, Elgstrom, 2001, True, 2001, Wodak, 1997, Goetz, 1996) to establish a theoretical basis for 'gender mainstreaming.' In thinking about the construction of

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[104] This problem is related to the liberal feminist premise that increasing levels of female representation will change how institutions operate, and ultimately lead to gender equality. This approach can disappoint in that radical restructuring, such as the destruction of the mutually reinforcing relationship of patriarchy with liberalism, may be necessary in order to produce substantive institutional change.

feminist knowledge(s), the project drew on feminist expertise in IR, philosophy, linguistics, and policy studies. No longer interested in 'how many women?' the PhD project sought to assess normative shifts regarding gender policy and how language change could be identified as a qualitative indicator of social change (Spender, 1980).[105] The methodology for my study took a firm qualitative rather than quantitative grounding in line with other critical feminist work (Oakley, 2000; 4). I set out to establish why gender mainstreaming had been introduced in the Republic of Ireland, and whether it had led to a normative shift in Irish gender equality policy. I employed feminist knowledge(s), theories, practices and perspectives to build knowledge of gender mainstreaming. In practice, as many Irish policy-makers interested in or working on gender and specifically gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland as possible were interviewed. The 34 interviews conducted provided current ideas, insights, and information on Irish policy-making and gender mainstreaming. The level of expertise, knowledge and openness to feminist ideas encountered in the interview process confirmed the contention that it is ideas and how they are legitimated that produces and reproduces female subjugation. A review of Irish political history and the ideas on which Irish political culture are founded (argued in Chapters 5 and 6) helped to identify liberalism rather than feminism as the 'inevitable cheat' in terms of Irish gender equality.[106] Moreover, by using a feminist methodology, the research project avoided appropriation as more evidence of the 'failure' of feminism to provide workable equality policies. Rather, the critical perspective adopted allowed the project to expose Irish political culture and bureaucracy as patriarchal

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[105] In the final analysis, language obstacles proved useful as indicators of more profound obstacles to change at the ideological level. Femocrats' problems in communicating gender mainstreaming were related to its irrelevance to broader governmental goals despite its inclusion in government policy.

[106] '...liberalism, as an ideology, is only able to define an area of public life in which woman would theoretically have unlimited opportunity without providing her access to it' (Eisenstein, 1993; 90).

institutions struggling to modernize, on a liberal ideological basis.[107] The initial interest in gender mainstreaming as an ambitious feminist policy (at least in the Irish context) evolved into questions about the makeup and status of feminist knowledge. The importance of language, meaning and knowledge constructing techniques in the development of gender mainstreaming led to the interrogation of gender mainstreaming as a significant development for feminism. Some of these interrogations resulted in the argument surrounding gender statistics below.

4.2.1. Gender Statistics

A common criticism of feminism[108] (or at least feminist research) is that it does not provide a substantive explanation of why women generally fail to reach the same levels of seniority in jobs, income levels or political office as men. Annual statistics clearly indicate

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[107] Eisenstein (1996; 189) argues that neo-liberalism, manifest in performance management techniques is 'funndamentally inimical to feminist and social justice goals,' as it conceptualises policy in purely economic terms, disregarding social impacts or the fact that free market techniques fail to challenge established cultural norms (such as the norm that economic growth is a priority over equity goals, for instance).

[108] My earlier caveat about the heterogeneity of feminism still stands (Alcoff and Potter, 1992).

that women are consistently under-performing men in the public sphere.[109] In Ireland, 6% of university professors are women, we have never had a female Taoiseach and women represent only 13% of TDs.[110] Women earn on average 40% less than men.[111] While these statistics may seem convincing, they do not explain *why* women 'under-perform'. Indeed, they do little more than re-affirm that the problem of gender inequality persists despite the introduction of equality policy and legislation over the last 30 years. This persistence has prompted feminists to think about how informative these statistics are.[112] These figures do not measure unpaid work. They offer no breakdown of time spent at work or leisure according to gender. Statistics do not aid the identification of the stage in career progression towards university professor at which women opt out. Similarly in politics, what stops women running for office in the first place? Because the empirical is privileged in political science and the empirical, by definition, only measures the observable, reporting on non-participation is rendered redundant. These factors remain generally unconsidered and unmeasured by categories of analysis whose attempts at objectivity result in an unquestioning recording of political activity. As Elshtain (1997) has noted,[113]

> 'statistics analyse the effects of the traditional division of labour using the categories of the historically male domain of professionism (sic) thereby reflecting the (under)performance of women when they do operate in that domain, whilst

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[109] 'Living in Ireland Survey' at http://www.cso.ie/

[110] Galligan, Y., Knight, K and Nic Giolla Choille, U. (2000) 'Pathways to Power: Women in the Oireachtas, 1919-2000' in McNamara, M. and Mooney; *Women in Parliament Ireland: 1918-2000* Dublin: Wolfhound. pp. 61.

[111] Nolan, B. and Watson, D. (1999) *Women and Poverty in Ireland* Dublin: Oak Tree Press. These issues are explored in some detail in Chapter 5.

[112] Feminist researchers have developed methodologies that uncover the subtle ways that one's gender affects one's everyday life (Reinharz, 1992; Byrne and Lentin, 2000; Stanley, 1990).

[113] 'Women have had to struggle not only against political policies, structures, and arrangements but against definitions of politics and modes of political explanation as well' (Elshtain, 1997; 26).

deflecting the social conditions and ideologies that constrict their upward mobility or that keep them out of that domain altogether' (Elshtain, 1997; 26).

These broader questions remain were not asked in the conceptual development of gender mainstreaming, whose implementation requires that it be coherently defined (Chapter 2), not use too many resources (Chapter 5) and to demonstrate governmental commitment to gender equality (Chapter 6).

> For these reasons, concerns about the quality of data are rare. Both policy-makers and academics seem most concerned that 'gender disaggregated data' is gathered as it is identified as the foundation stone of gender mainstreaming. This is related to the construction of tools for gender mainstreaming, such as performance indicators, which are currently the main concern of gender mainstreaming policy-makers. Indicators come from the influence of new public management[114] that seeks to assess the impact of public policy, generally on a cost-value basis. This paradigm is heavily influenced by neo-liberal economics, which reduces the citizen to consumer. In this environment, without statistics as to the current position of men and women *vis à vis* policy, it is impossible to develop gender proofing tools and gender equality indicators with which to monitor improvement. It is deemed impossible to 'mainstream gender' without statistics on gender, specifically gender disaggregated data.

There are many debates amongst policy-making communities relating to gender disaggregated data, the construction of quantitative indicators of gender equality, and

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[114] 'New public management theory spawned the audit culture and its focus on results (Hughes, 1998; Strathern, 2000). It emphasises the measurement of performance against objectives, with defined responsibilities for achieving these objectives and the use of data - especially cost and output information - to evaluate performance and decide whether to apply sanctions or rewards' (Blackman, 2001; 1 available at http://www.whb.co.uk/socialissues/index.htm

theoretical questions underpinning data collection in relation to gender. These debates are important, because statistics are used to prove *both* the need for, and the efficacy of, gender equality policies like gender mainstreaming. This is precisely the basis on which the critique of performance indicators made in this thesis is based. Performance indicators, in general, are desirable when they are used to expose the fact that government has failed to act on an electoral mandate or international convention. However, when used in relation to gender equality policy-making they are problematic for two reasons. Firstly, the absence of gender disaggregated data makes it almost impossible to construct meaningful quantitative indicators of current levels of gender inequality (benchmarks). Secondly, in the absence of a feminist cognitive framework, robustly articulated by institutionalised and legitimate femocrats, performance indicators can be constructed on irrelevant criteria. For instance, the quantitative representation of women in the workforce is not meaningful for gender equality if work is defined as paid work outside the home. Were a performance indicator to be constructed using that definition of work, it might conclude that women do less work than men and therefore contribute less to the national economy. This examples illustrates how the femocrats play a vital role in arguing for broader definitions of work and providing vocabulary through which stereotypes and assumptions can be challenged in policy-making. As such, the issue of data is integral not just to this thesis, but also to the implementation of gender mainstreaming itself. The following section explains in some detail why gender disaggregated data is identified as crucial to the mainstreaming process.

4.2.2. Disaggregated Data

While gender disaggregated data is consistently recognised as a vital component of gender proofing and therefore in the implementation of gender mainstreaming, it has also become a more general concern of equality agencies and feminist organisations operating outside the 'gender mainstreaming' of the National Development Plan. For instance, agencies such as the Equality Authority, formerly known as the Employment Equality Agency, found it difficult to quantify the impact of its various voluntary codes of practice and recommendations.

> 'The lack of gender disaggregated data in many areas has forced it to rely on general indicators such as trends in part-time work and low pay... 'on impressions rather than objective data.''[115]

Indeed, the preoccupation with gathering data on male and female participation rates in various sectors of society is one of the key changes in Irish gender equality policy with the introduction of gender mainstreaming.

> 'Sound baseline data about the relative position of women,' and 'clear target setting and indicators' are explicitly listed as key tools in the implementation of gender mainstreaming (Gender Equality in Agriculture and Rural Development Factsheet, 2001, 3.1).

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[115] McGinley, M. (1996) *From Employment Equality Agency to Equality Authority,* Sixth Report to the Fourth Joint Oireachtas Committee on Women's Rights, Dublin: Government Stationery Office (quoted in Donnelly, Mullally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 43).

The current concern with establishing a numerical picture of women's relative contribution to the Irish economy, society and politics is key in convincing policy and decision-makers that concrete changes in how policy is made are necessary.
As such, the presence of adequate statistics on female participation is identified as the basis on which knowledge about gender can be communicated.

So, the position of data is privileged. Procuring relevant and usable data, however, proved elusive, as demonstrated by the gender impact assessment forms returned in 2000 (see table 16 in appendix 3). The gender equality expert concludes that apart from the Marine Tourism and Recreational Angling measures (part of the Regional Operational programmes)

> 'most (other) GIA forms did not include such comprehensive information or analysis' (McGauran, 2002; 5).

The quality of this data demonstrates a lack of understanding as to what questions in any particular survey will yield 'relevant data.' Also, data about the current situation does nothing to avoid reproduction of recorded inequalities in the future. The question that has yet to be posed, therefore is 'How does data become equality?' 'Through indicators?' The following discussion of indicators builds a story of gender mainstreaming concluding that, while the policy and all those charged with its implementation are obsessed with the idea of quantifying equality, the policy itself is best measured without the use of statistics.

The implementation of gender mainstreaming is mostly record-keeping as there are few implementing bodies and lots of monitoring bodies. This is demonstrated in the following table, which reports high response rates for gender impact assessment forms.

Table 15: Gender Impact Assessment forms in the NDP[116]

Operational Programme	Applicable measures	Number completed	Percentage
Economic and Social Infrastructure	10	10	100
Employment and Human Resources	33	32	97
Southern and Eastern Region	57	38	67
Border, midland, west region	55	36	65
Productive sector	Exempt		
Total	155	116	75

However, the quality of the information contained in the impact assessment forms was deemed unsatisfactory. The whole process of impact assessments seems to become almost self-referential as policy-makers are distracted by the process of evaluation and lose sight of the central purpose of gender mainstreaming, to produce gender equal policy outcomes.

Statistics, therefore, are really only used in a promotional capacity in order to convince policy-makers to actually implement gender mainstreaming. They are not used for implementing the policy *per se*. In reality, is gender disaggregated data necessary to

[116] McGauran (2002) quoted in FitzGerald (2003; 225).

introduce ramps on buses, provide tax breaks for childcare, institute father's rights or remunerate carers for their contribution to the economy? No, but in a performance management culture statistics are necessary to show that investment is justified. So, the gender mainstreaming process begins with identifying which policies are gender biased. The problem, however, is that policy-makers are stalled at this stage. Gender proofing does not offer solutions, rather it demonstrates that there is a problem, never producing policies to re-distribute power and resources. Recent quantitative evaluations of the process of gender-proofing published by Irish policy-makers reveals frustration with measuring the impact of gender mainstreaming,

> 'Unfortunately across both Regional operational programmes there is little data with which to measure the *impact* of their activities on equal opportunities' (Department of Finance, Mid-term evaluations, 2003; 224).

There are a number of reasons why this is the case, not least, the lack of incentives and resources to encourage initiative and the fact that data on gender does not produce effective policy. In general, no explicit and coherent link is made between tasks such as data gathering and the ultimate goal (i.e. gender equality), rendering data-gathering academic to policy-makers trained to deliver public services. Policy-makers tend to feel overwhelmed by the task and often find it simpler to stick to what they know, or tackle the tasks where they know results can be achieved. Are indicators the link between demonstrating a problem exists (data) and producing measures to alleviate it (goals)? If indicators do represent part of a solution, then current problems arise from the absence of critical indicators of anything other than economic progress in the Irish policy-making

system (Galligan et. al., 2000; 50). Indicators, specifically indicators for gender equality, are discussed in some detail below.

4.2.3. Gender Equality Indicators

Indicators can be defined as

> 'statistical information chosen specifically to shed light on a particular economic, demographic or social problem or question' (Statistics Sweden in Galligan et. al., 2000; 50).

In terms of gender equality, indicators provide useful information on the relative social, economic and political status of women and men. Indicators reveal problem areas so that goals and objectives can be identified and solutions developed. While indicators are recognised as expensive and cumbersome to produce, they are recognised as successful markers of relative policy performance. Quantitative indicators are recognised as necessary in the first instance, with the possibility of more sophisticated 'qualitative' offspring in the future.[117] There are a number of necessary pre-requisites for the successful production of indicators. Firstly, indicators are built on a foundation of timely and accurate data. In order to operate as a clear, consistent and sensitive indicator of a social problem the indicator should be transferable across social groups and geographical areas. Indicators are infinitely more useful if they have been constructed in consultation with

[117] The reasoning here is that rational bureaucratic tools can be used to prove the need for more widespread policy activity on gender issues. Some fear that quantitative tools will never amount to anything other than self-referential measurement strategies for economic rationalists (Woodward, 2001; 2003).

stakeholders. A high quality indicator will be constructed with an awareness of past trends and an openness to future eventualities (Galligan et. al., 2000; 51). Even a cursory glance at the necessary prerequisites for the construction of indicators reveals the impossibility of producing viable indicators in the Republic of Ireland. There is no coherent gender disaggregated database. Data comparable across class, race and geographical location is particularly elusive given the tradition of counting only formal, public and legitimate arenas of life.[118] This is a serious impediment to the implementation of gender mainstreaming, as indicators are identified as important tools in the mainstreaming process. This brief discussion of indicators is included to show that policy research experience prompted the adoption of a qualitative methodology for the study of gender mainstreaming. Essentially, lessons learned about the difficulties surrounding quantitative analysis of gender mainstreaming during the 1999-2000 pilot study revealed that much work needed to be done at the theoretical level before gender mainstreaming could even begin to be assessed for its impact in practice.

4.2.4. Quantitative Data: A question of theory

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[118] Public statistics tend to concentrate on labour force participation rates, economic indicators, crime rates, industry, agriculture, transport, tourism, election results and general population figures. Unpaid labour, affective work, the private sphere, gender stereotyping, racial differences and levels distributive equality tend not to concern policy-makers, and so do not feature in statistical databanks (see. http://www.cso.ie).

When does data become a question of theory? Data becomes a question of theory when insufficient data on a certain aspect of society, for example gender, reveals bias through omission. The absence of gender disaggregated data, as argued earlier, results in the disproportionate reporting of the position of men in society. Gender-neutral recording, because it was based on rigid categories of participation (breadwinner, occupation etc.) effectively ignored the participation of women.[119] So, the collection of data that includes gender as a primary category, requires a fresh perspective, though this argument is not easily assimilated by policy-makers socialized to accept current government priorities.[120] So, even the gathering of data on gender becomes a political bargaining point. Every tiny step in the process of implementing gender equality policy must be argued for. The first step for any policy-maker is to prove that the resources are justified. These obstacles are illustrated by the words of a senior policy-maker with 30 years experience of the Irish civil service:

> 'When maternity leave was brought in initially everybody thought that the country would go broke, that we would never be able to deal with it that it was mad. Every single equality change that becomes part of the landscape was out of sync with society at first. It is never cool to be working in an area that is always out of sync with society. It is cool to be working in an area that everybody wants, like the economy' (Author Interview, R2, June 2002; 2).

In reality, policies like gender mainstreaming exist at the margins of government policy. This makes data all the more significant because it is used to justify investment of time

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[119] 'The exclusion of unpaid work at home, work that historically been largely done by women, from calculations of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), serves to make such work invisible' (Nelson, 1996; 118).

[120] 'Gender mainstreaming is part of government policy, but there is a lot more activity in an economy other than the NDP or government policy that will never be touched by gender mainstreaming' (Author Interview, R5, July 2002; 3).

and resources in the policy. However, it is precisely because gender equality occupies this marginal status that it is sidelined statistically as well. Beliefs about gender, imbedded in our political culture result in ignorance about gender issues.[121] The absence of credible, regular and comparable statistics on any of the critical areas of concern is an impediment to the implementation of gender mainstreaming:

> 'Generally data was highly uneven and variable, dispersed across a variety of different organisations and structures reflecting a lack of co-ordination and integration in the approach to data and data collection systems in this country'[122]

Lack of consistent data collection also raises serious problems for those wishing to study the impact of gender mainstreaming. Issues surrounding data raised questions of a more theoretical nature. Also, the absence of relevant and useable data raised more fundamental questions about the position of gender equality policy in the Republic of Ireland. What value system gave rise to a system where data was never collected according to gender? Does the lack of available data suggest a similar lack of knowledge in the area of gender? If there is no quantifiable measure of the relative position of women in the economy, political system, education and other sectors how can we devise gender mainstreaming tools?

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[121] Here, Irish feminism could draw on the work of 'feminists of color,' who claim that 'without knowing how those who live oppressed lives understand their lives, data will have little meaning' (Lorber and Farrell, 1991; 9).

[122] Barry, U. (2000) *Building the Picture: the role of data in achieving equality* Dublin: Equality Authority pp. 5 quoted in Galligan et. al (2000) *op. cit.* pp. 44. This is due to the fact that women tend to live and work outside public institutions, and, as data is not collected on traditional female categories of carers, homemakers, charity workers, part-time tutors or family-workers, data on women generally does not exist in the public domain.

Crucial to producing high quality statistics that are accessible, comparable, timely and accurate is knowing what questions to ask. In the case of gender, the knowledge base that is needed to produce useful statistics is found in women's studies centres, universities, research organisations and activist groups. Thererfore, a level of co-ordination between policy-makers, statistical organisations and feminist groups is necessary in order to produce the data necessary to even begin to produce indicators that are in turn used to develop gender mainstreaming. Given the centrality of data to the mainstreaming project, it was decided that for this project, I would begin by assessing what knowledge was needed. What kind of questions would be useful if one was gathering data with a view to developing mainstreaming?

Most importantly, the lack of publicly available statistics widened the gap between theory and practice regarding gender mainstreaming. How could knowledge about gender equality and feminist theories on female subjugation be translated into mainstream bureaucratic practice without the aid of statistics to verify feminist arguments?[123] The answer is, with difficulty. The absence of statistics made it more difficult to argue the case for indicators in the 1999 report. In terms of gender mainstreaming, it made advocates more dependent on feminist arguments and theories to promote gender mainstreaming. The absence of figures also revealed a high degree of confusion surrounding plans for the implementation of gender mainstreaming. Optimistically, the absence of data presented an opportunity to collect data in an age less accepting of dichotomous gender identities. It provided an opportunity to question established categories from the liberal individual

[123] Moser (1993) argues that the key to developing gender policy is to recognise that 'gender planning is both technical and political in nature' (Moser, 1993; 171)... 'it is essential to ensure that indicators developed are adequate and relevant to the evaluation of gender' (Moser, 1993; 169).

rights era. The possibility of including men, multiple categories of women and thus producing a more holistic picture of Irish society through a new set of statistics was revealed.[124] New data may include quantifying the value of unpaid work in the home; the number of fathers taking career breaks for caring rather than further education reasons; or the relationship between rising living costs and the replacement of previously 'free' domestic goods and services with private sector provision of childcare, home-cooked meals, laundry services and convenience foods. In essence, the issue of data became a question of theory when absent data revealed that the type of question one asked, (i.e. why and how), reflected much about the status of certain categories and groups in Irish society. As such, political cultural values and attitudes must allow for the collection of data according to new, ungendered categories in order to ask challenging questions in gender impact assessment, gender proofing or other pre-mainstreaming policy activities. The challenge, therefore, was to gather data that would move the analysis out of this patriarchal loop.

In order to extract this project from the vicious circle of 'the absence of quantitative data renders research impossible' a more broad-minded approach to what constituted "data" was necessary. As a result, a number of diverse data sources were used, including gender impact assessment forms published by the Employment and Human Resources

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[124] Those working with WID have expressed concern that moving towards 'mainstreaming' merely means developing policy for men (Moser, 1993; 158). Molyneaux (in Jackson and Pearson, 1998; 81), on the other hand, argues that there is potential to articulate women's interests in multiple ways. '...women's movements have developed diverse forms of association with other political agencies; sometimes their gender interests have been defined and fought for by themselves, sometimes they have been defined, authorised and supported from above. In the same way, gender interests can be struggled for within a variety of different strategies.' For a detailed analysis of the limits of women-only projects see Chant, S. (2000) 'From Woman-Blind to 'Man-Kind' should men have more space in gender and development?' *IDS Bulletin,* Vol. 31., No. 2, 8-14.

Operational Programme of the NDP, internal evaluations from the Gender Equality Unit at the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform, and, more recently, mid-term evaluations of the National Development Plan (FitzGerald, 2003). The Second Commission on the Status of Women and the National Plan for Women, together with government reports on gender equality, statistics and equality in general provided important insights. However, the main data source became the 34 interviews with policy-makers implicated in the new regime. The gender impact assessment forms (see appendix 3) demonstrated the futility of attempting to quantify the gender impact of policies at this stage. The interviews with policy-makers act as a means of explaining why the gender impact assessment forms and mid-term evaluations appear so ineffective at this stage.[125]

4.3 Qualitative Analysis: Interviews with Policy-Makers 1999/2000 and 2002

This section of the Chapter provides an explicit justification for the adoption of a qualitative approach in terms of answering the research question. The section also provides details about previous research undertaken (1999-2000), the gathering of interview data and the design of interview schedules, samples and questions. As stated earlier in the Chapter, the interviewing was done in two stages. The first group (1999/2000) represented a pilot sample, interviewed for the indicators project in 1999/2000. The second group (2002) were specifically targeted for their involvement in the implementation of gender mainstreaming, explicitly chosen and clearly consulted in

[125] For a full performance review of the National Development Plan to date see Fitzgerald, J. et. al. (2003) *The Mid-term Evaluation of the National Development Plan and the Community Support Framework for Ireland, 2000-2006* Department of Finance: October 2003. Available at www.ndp.ie

terms of the research question for this particular project. The first group of respondents were not randomly sampled, neither were rigorous selection criteria applied, but as the data is useful in a number of ways outlined below, I decided to include it in the final thesis.

My main contribution to the government report *The Development of Mechanisms to Monitor Progress in Achieving Gender Equality in Ireland* (2000) was the organising, conducting and analysis of 25 semi-structured interviews with key policy actors relating to the four central concerns of the research project – a substantive review of the Second Commission on the Status of Women, the potential usefulness of gender equality indicators and of gender-disaggregated data, and the establishment of institutional structures for monitoring gender equality (Galligan et.al., 2000; 15-16). These interviews provided experience of interviewing, contact with key policy actors and a knowledge base on which to construct a research design for the examination of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland. Given the significance of these interviews and the fact that the thesis is essentially an extension of the work begun in 1999/2000, it was thought that the majority of this interview data should be explicitly identified as part of the data gathering process. This decision was taken once the permission had been received from the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform, the Director of the project team and the respondents for the initial project. Permission to use 18 of the 26 interviews was granted. These interviews were used to develop key research themes for the thesis. The first theme related to a norm change, from a women's rights to a gender equality agenda. The second identified the significance of the Report of the Second Commission on the Status of

Women as a blueprint for gender equality in the Republic of Ireland up until 1995. The third theme, relating to the norm change identified, was concerned with difficulties policy-makers experienced in understanding gender mainstreaming, and the obstacles that prohibited the gathering of reliable gender-disaggregated data. These themes were developed into research questions for the 2002 research and are used as supplementary evidence throughout the final thesis. However, due to the fact that these interviews represented a process of consultation for the writing of a government report they are not analysed in the same way as the data gathered for the project proper, nor are they included as primary evidence supporting the specific hypotheses of the thesis.

In the Republic of Ireland gender mainstreaming is implemented as one small element of a seven-year project, financed in part by European Structural Funds, called the National Development Plan. Gender mainstreaming is currently being implemented across the whole plan (at http://www.ndpgenderequality.ie). Requests for interview were sent to policy-makers involved in the implementation of gender mainstreaming according to criteria specified below.[126] Interviews were requested from 53 potential participants, from which there were 27 respondents for this project. Of the 53 requests for interview, 23 policy-makers never responded, despite follow up telephone calls. However, 4 of the non-respondents did recommend more junior members of staff who then contacted me directly. One respondent was on long-term sick leave and another retired during the six-month period, leaving a total of 25 successful interviews being conducted. Respondents were chosen on four distinct bases: First, membership of the Social Inclusion and Equal

[126] A copy of the letter sent to potential respondents can be found in Appendix 1.

Opportunities Co-ordinating Committee, which co-ordinates equality policy and legislation. Second, direct involvement with gender mainstreaming through his/her position in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, the lead department on gender mainstreaming. Third, senior membership on the National Women's Council of Ireland, representing institutionalised feminism in Ireland. Finally, a number of interviews were conducted on the basis of recommendations from other respondents as a valuable contributor to the project.[127] As such, the technique used is commonly referred to as 'snowballing'[128] in that every possible available respondent was contacted until no further recommendations were forthcoming. 'Snowballing' is a particularly useful technique when interviewing public servants, who move between departments and programmes on a regular basis. Moreover, my experience of having worked for the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform on the previous project (1999-2000) meant that I was in a social network which facilitated the procurement of a high response rate. Respondents included EU bureaucrats and policy-makers who previously or presently worked on gender equality. A minority of respondents were familiar with gender mainstreaming having worked on the equality agenda for many years. Senior policy-makers from this group suggested other experienced equality policy-makers who had now moved to new areas of policy-making. The resident femocrat was also interviewed. She provided an introduction to other policy-makers, particularly those new to the area of gender equality. This group made up the majority of respondents: those who were undertaking gender impact assessments on their work, but were entirely new to the area of gender equality policy-

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[127] Eisenstein (1996; *xxii*) used a similar method in her study of Australian femocrats, she termed it the 'snowballing' technique.

[128] 'a "snowballing" approach allows you to add more and more interviewees as you progress through the interview schedule-one interviewee leads you to discover another person you should talk with, and so on' (Champion, 2003; 5).

making. These policy-makers found the femocrat an important source of both inspiration and practical help when reporting on gender impact assessments. Interviews were semi-structured but conducted openly in order to give respondents an opportunity to express their views. A list of questions is provided in Appendix 4.

The interviews were conducted over the six-month period from July to December 2002, apart from an initial pilot interview conducted in February of that year. Most interviews lasted about one to one-and-a-half hours. Anonymity of the respondents was assured, as most of the respondents were policy-makers who did not want to be identified. The interviews are coded according to a random numerical order in order to avoid recognition of respondents. Much time was spent deliberating on whether to tape record the interviews or not. It was decided that I would try to tape the first interview. This proved to be a cumbersome and unhelpful process for a number of reasons. Firstly, the tape-recording impeded the flow of the interview, acting as a distraction to both interviewer and interviewee. Secondly, and most importantly, the respondent offered a number of pieces of important information, but only when the tape recorder was turned off. This led to the conclusion that policy-makers would be more likely to speak freely in an interview situation if they were not recorded. In any case, most respondents made non-use of recording equipment a condition of interview. As a result, the only course of action left open to me was to take substantial notes during the interviews and write up the interviews immediately afterwards.

An alleged weakness of using qualitative interviews as evidence to support a theory is that readers may always assume that the researcher has cherry-picked the data for shreds of evidence to support her hypothesis.[129] This can be an obstacle in all interview-based research, but especially in cases where the interviews are confidential. I have taken a number of courses of action to avoid this problem. Firstly, I have included data from a series of interviews conducted in 1999, prior to the formulation of the theory and hypothesis for this research. This data acts as supplementary evidence of the propositions made and conclusions drawn from the analysis of interview data gathered specifically addressing the research question posed for this project, in 2002. Secondly, I have included an appendix (appendix 6) listing numerous quotes from all the interviews, listed in terms of the general hypotheses of the thesis. These quotes are as close as possible to providing the interview transcripts, which are confidential. Finally, I have employed a systematic method for applying the interview data to the theory and hypotheses. This approach, called analytic induction, is detailed below. Effectively, this approach allows for the systematic inclusion of contradictory evidence and cases, which negate the hypotheses. Wherever possible in the presentation of research findings in this Chapter, and peppered throughout the thesis as a whole, I have attempted to include and account for evidence that contradict the research hypothesis as well as that which supports it. For instance, most of the policy-makers attributed the introduction of gender mainstreaming to EU initiative, particularly pressure from the European Commission to gender proof policies. This finding contradicts my hypothesis that the EU is just one particular actor implicated in broader international initiatives to mainstreaming gender. However, policy-makers

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[129] For a rigorous discussion of qualitative research methods in general, and interview data in particular see Silverman, David (1993) *Interpreting Qualitative Data: methods for analysing talk, text and interaction* London: SAGE.

working on the National Plan for Women, asserted that the UN played a more important role in the introduction of gender mainstreaming. From these trends I gauged that policy-makers attributed the most significant role to the political actor with which their work was most closely associated. A closer look at the role of the EU revealed that all of the information and training policy-makers received on gender mainstreaming had been EU funded, supported or organised.

In order to reveal as much unbiased evidence as possible from the data, the analysis of interviews was conducted using a systematic technique of qualitative research called *analytic induction,* a standard method of testing hypotheses in field research (Silverman, 1993; 160 – 165). The initial step when employing analytic induction as a method is to define a phenomenon and generate a hypothesis (Silverman, 1993; 161). For this thesis, the phenomenon is gender mainstreaming, which is defined as follows:

> 'Gender mainstreaming' means that government policies should not create new structures of inequality nor reproduce existing inequalities between women and men based on gender roles, norms and identities that ascribe differential status to individuals on the basis of their biological sex.[130]

There are three different hypotheses being tested with the data gathered at interview.

H1: that the introduction of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland is the result of a combination of leadership by international actors and collaboration of national-level policy-makers who promote international norms at domestic level.

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[130] The definition constructed here is constructed on the feminist differentiation of 'sex' vs. 'gender.' This definition already appeared in Chapter 2,but is worth re-iterating here for the sake of clarity.

The first hypothesis was constructed on the basis of findings that emerged from the 1999-2000 project, which revealed that gender mainstreaming was not a purely national bureaucratic initiative. The literature revealed that gender mainstreaming had evolved from development policy rather than national bureaucracies (True, 2001). That said, it could not be operationalised without the work of domestic actors in pursuing means to gain funding for institutional supports such as the NDP Gender Equality Unit. It was therefore hypothesised that while gender mainstreaming had certainly initially emerged from international agreements (Beijing Platform for Action), domestic actors played a role in its introduction.

The second hypothesis is related to the first in that it also refers to significant changes at the national level. In this instance, the changes relate to political cultural transformations that took place since the 1970s, which suggested that the women's rights agenda of the second wave, which called for reproductive rights and equal pay, was being replaced by a new 'gender equality' agenda where the focus was on equality for men and women. The literature on women and politics in Ireland (Galligan, 1998) also suggested that the adoption of the popular gender mainstreaming remit would shift the focus of gender debates. Childcare, family-friendly working and fathers' rights typify this new agenda. It was hypothesised that gender mainstreaming represented a key role in this transformation as it moved gender issues from those of a cause-centred interest group (the women's movement) to a concern of central government departments.

H2: that the gender equality agenda in the Republic of Ireland has evolved from a women's rights to a gender equality agenda because of the adoption of gender mainstreaming.

The final hypothesis related to the transformative capacity of gender mainstreaming as a policy. Specifically, this hypothesis drew on findings from the literature, particularly, Mazey's (2000) contention that the conceptual development of gender mainstreaming had repercussions for its practical manifestation. The results of interviews with policy-makers in activists in 1999 also revealed that gender mainstreaming appeared vague and indeterminate to those who would play a crucial role in its implementation. As such, the hypothesis was that these indeterminacies would result in multiple interpretations as to what precisely gender mainstreaming should achieve, and, hence, miscommunication between policy-makers and feminists, which would ultimately hinder the development of gender mainstreaming as a policy practice.

H3: that ambiguities surrounding the interpretation and definition of gender mainstreaming, manifest in the language of gender mainstreaming impede its successful implementation.

The process of analytic induction involves closely reading the interview transcripts a number of times. Each time the transcript is read with a different hypothesis in mind. Sections of the transcripts, usually answers to particular questions were provisionally classified according to particular variables. The transcript was then re-read, this time looking for all other pieces of evidence supporting or contradicting a particular hypothesis. Deviant responses were put into an 'other' category and re-assessed later. The isolation of these deviant cases allowed for some basic conclusions to be drawn from the remaining evidence. It was by this process of induction that I was able to substantively claim that most policy-makers thought the EU was the most important actor in initiating

the adoption of gender mainstreaming. This process also allowed me to conclude that domestic policy-makers played a key role by using international pressure to gain more resources for gender policy. The deviant cases revealed that childcare was an area of policy that had been unofficially 'mainstreamed.' The pre-occupation with the meaning of gender mainstreaming evidenced in the literature (Chapter 3) was also evident in the interview data as a deviant case. This finding is discussed in some detail in Chapter 6. Analytic induction, therefore, provided an extremely effective method for applying some of the 'necessary' and 'sufficient' criteria of quantitative research to qualitative work conducted within an interpretative framework.

4.4 Research Question

One aspect of the thesis analyses how Irish policy-makers deal with the ambitious 'gender mainstreaming' remit, outlined in the Beijing commitments. A review of the literature revealed that very little academic research has been conducted on this aspect of gender equality policy (Swiebel, 1988). However, recent research into Ireland's EU membership exposes how supra-national policy impacts on Irish policy-makers (Laffan in O'Donnell, 2000; 138). My research investigates the impact of international gender equality standards on Irish policy-makers in a similar vein. I analyse the response of Irish policy-makers to the process of 'gender mainstreaming' as outlined in UN commitments.[131] Moreover, the

[131] It must be re-iterated that 'gender mainstreaming' is now codified in national and EU legislation as well (Donnelly, 1999).

approach of Irish policy-makers to 'gender mainstreaming' may have broader implications for policy. The adoption of 'mainstreaming' as a policy-making technique, if successfully implemented, could herald a new era of inter-departmental policy-making at both national and international levels. So, the principal research question is:

What is the capacity of gender mainstreaming to be a transformative policy tool in the Irish case?

This central research question gave rise to a number of challenges that had to be addressed before the research question itself could be adequately dealt with. The question that took up the most research time and effort, and the one that also seems to be the greatest drain on resources for respondents was simply, 'what is gender mainstreaming?'/ what does gender mainstreaming mean? As a result I began to link the transformative capacity of gender mainstreaming to the ability of policy-makers to interpret the policy in the Irish context. The research identified the role of feminists as gender experts, an epistemic community (Haas, 1992) in facilitating the translation of gender mainstreaming for mainstream policy-makers. This analysis exposed policy-makers' difficulties in understanding gender mainstreaming and femocrats' struggle to establish the policy as a coherent, legitimate and credible use of policy-makers time.[132] Femocrats achieved this by attempting to replace masculine bureaucratic language with a vocabulary of gender mainstreaming (Chapter 3). The challenges encountered lend credence to Mazey's (2000)

[132] The gender equality expert remarks: 'I thought I would actually be involved in changing policies but most of what I am doing is awareness raising. I sometimes think should be called the communications and marketing expert' (Author Interview, R1, February 2002; 16).

claim that intellectual and real world mainstreaming are inter-related. This argument is based on the assumption that

> 'ideas and knowledge constitute important resources for interest groups, which serve to mobilize individuals, 'epistemic communities' (Haas, 1992) and 'advocacy coalitions' (Sabatier, 1998), and/or to legitimise particular policies (Dudley and Richardson, 1999)' (Mazey, 2000; 338).

As such, the standards which gender mainstreaming can achieve are pre-determined by the ideological and intellectual basis on which it is founded. Intellectual mainstreaming must represent and articulate the interests of mainstreaming in a robust fashion if the transformative capacity of the policy is to be realised.

4.5 Conclusion: Qualitative Substance /Quantitative Pictures

The Chapter concludes that a combination of methodologies and research strategies were necessary in order to address the research question. In summation, quantitative data in the form of official gender statistics is used to illustrate the extent of female and male representation and participation across the twelve critical areas of concern outlined in the Platform for Action. These statistics make a strong case for the existence of gender inequality, and hence the need for new gender policy, in this case gender mainstreaming, in the Republic of Ireland. However, qualitative data and analysis are necessary to ascertain why gender mainstreaming was introduced and how it co-exists with established

national gender policy. This approach also accounts for the bureaucrat/feminist dialogue necessitated by gender mainstreaming.

The Chapter describes the process of data gathering through interviews and documentary analysis. It concludes that interviews and documentary analysis add qualitative substance to the quantitative picture painted by gender statistics, presented at the beginning of the Chapter. The following Chapters introduce the details of the Irish case, context and background (Chapter 5) and the main research findings (Chapter 6).

PART THREE: THE IRISH CASE

Chapter Five

Republic Of Ireland: Mainstreaming in Challenging Circumstances

5.1 Introduction

Ireland is an especially informative case for the analysis of the adoption and implementation of gender mainstreaming given its conservative political culture, tempered by more recent liberal internationalism and a liberal feminist background.

> 'Feminists writing on the status of women in the Irish state have variously described it as Catholic, a police state and a 'lagger' in terms of equality in comparison with its European partners (Randall and Smyth, 1987; 200; Smyth, 1992a; Gardiner, 1997; 9).[133]

Even in the dry terms of bureaucratic practice, the implementation of a strategic and broadly feminist policy like gender mainstreaming is at odds with a policy-making system traditionally structured around departmental fragmentation and a process of incremental policy-making. 'We don't communicate and coordinate well in the civil service' (Author Interview, R11, July 2002; 1 & 4,). Essentially, gender equality has evolved from being a marginal issue vaguely associated with the labour market, to becoming part of general policy-making in Ireland (Galligan et. al., 2000; 14). This Chapter provides an historical,

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[133] In particular, Irish policy regarding abortion rights have led to Ireland being branded a 'police state'. Smyth, A. (1992a) 'The Politics of Abortion in a Police State' (ed.) (1992) *The Abortion Papers, Ireland.* Dublin: Attic Press.

political and sociological background to the evolution of women's rights in the Republic of Ireland over the past 30-40 years.

One of the key changes in Irish political culture since the 1970s has been the adoption of a liberal democratic rights culture in conjunction with the industrialisation, urbanisation and modernisation of the economy. The values of classic liberalism – freedom, equality and individual rights have been key to the identification of Irish women with economic independence, equality before the law, freeing them from the roles of wife, mother, daughter and sister of the clerical nationalist era. Conservative Irish political culture always identified women in relation to a male relative, never as individuals in their own right. The conceptual shift from clericalism to liberalism is key to the transformation of the economic, social and political status of women in the Irish Republic. However, since the late 1980s/early 1990s Irish political culture has developed under the influence of a strong neo-liberal economic agenda of successive Fianna Fáil governments. This agenda, a product of globalisation, and Irish governmental determination to compete in the global marketplace has led to more cost-oriented government policy, a focus on performance and results and a more challenging period for gender equality policy-makers to argue for funding from within growth-oriented government strategies. It is important to clearly distinguish between 'liberalism' and 'neo-liberalism' as ideologies which impact on the achievement of gender inequalities. Liberalism, initially heralded as the key to freeing Irish women from narrowly defined socially ascribed roles such as wife and mother, disappointed many of the liberals of the 1970s by failing to successfully remove many of the obstacles to female equality such as responsibility for unpaid work in the home. While

liberalism may have disappointed, neo-liberalism seems more likely to roll back gains women have made during the liberal era. By focusing on the implications of policy for budgets rather than for people, neo-liberal policy-making tends to reduce the status of gender equality policy to a luxury that should only be availed of if deemed to be affordable. This distinction is important in terms of crystallising the inopportune structures resulting in the problems experienced by the gender mainstreaming agenda as narrated by Irish policy-makers in Chapter 6.

Gender mainstreaming represents the first time the feminist agenda has attempted to influence the mainstream from the inside out. Irish equality policy has tended to be based on legislation (Author Interview, R 23, December 2002; 3). Never before has there been any coordination of departments to deal with the fact that gender inequality permeates every aspect of Irish life. The traditional approach to gender equality problems has been to 'add women and stir'[134] to the extent where 'women and' becomes part of the vocabulary of those working in equality and within the mainstream policy process. Everything from 'women and the environment' to 'women and politics' is listed as a sideline for those interested in the mainstream policy areas.

> 'This ad hoc approach ensures that the issue of women's equality is starved of reflective thinking and careful planning' (Second Commission on the Status of Women, 1993; 9). [135]

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[134] This phrase is commonly attributed to Dale Spender (quoted in Irons, 1993, at http://www.murdoch.edu.au/elaw/issues/v1n1/iorns113.html).

[135] See list of Chapters titles of the Second Commission on the Status of Women later in this Chapter.

'Women and..' terminology signifies the peripheral location of women within all areas of Irish life. Evidence from the literature, together with observed variances between the Second Commission on the Status of Women (1993) the National Plan for Women (2002), point towards the improbability of gender mainstreaming having emerged as an initiative of the Irish political system.

The Irish case illustrates the significance of creating a space for gender policy in established (patriarchal) institutions. In addressing this discrepancy this Chapter reports on the economic and political status of gender in Irish political culture. The analysis of the social features and political culture of the Republic of Ireland presented in this Chapter acts as a supplement to interview and documentary evidence, claiming that the introduction of 'gender mainstreaming' is a defining moment in translating what was originally an issue for women's organisations into a mainstream policy based on international gender norms.

5.1.1. Irish Political Culture

The evolution of Irish political culture since the foundation of the state in 1922, is integral to understanding current dilemmas in gender policy. The values of nationalist leaders became the bedrock of Irish society and politics, and resulted in the establishment of 'Irish

Holy Catholic Nationalism' (White, 2003; 3). These principles were later solidified by DeValera in his 1937 Constitution which

> 'conceptualised the ideal Irish society to be rural, athletic, agrarian, ascetic, religious, family centred if not communal and many would argue sexist' (White, 2003; 5).

The political culture was cemented in Irish society via education, economic protectionism and conservative social policies. These values remained the staples of Irish political culture until a process of internationalisation opened, first, the Irish economy, and later Irish society and political culture to late 20th century liberalism, a transition recognised as typical in many post-colonial states. The post-colonial heritage described by Kiberd (in Murray, 1997) has resulted in a number of cross-cutting histories and political perspectives influencing the current official gender agenda in the Republic of Ireland. The values of republicanism, liberalism, freedom and democracy have constantly battled with a conservative political culture, habitually subordinate to the canons of the Catholic Church and traditionally suspicious of change given 800 years of British occupation (Coakley in Coakley and Gallagher, 1999; 52). Marooned in a polity with a constitution based on traditional social structures, up until the 1970s Irish women looked set to endure a narrow experience of life within the traditional roles of wife and mother. The pervasive influence of the Roman Catholic Church on Irish society and politics is evidenced in the 1937 Constitution (Gallagher, 1999; 77).

> 'For almost thirty years after the constitution was adopted, laws based on the premise that women's rights were inferior to those of men survived in and indeed even appeared on the statute books' (Scannell quoted in Galligan, 1998; 30).

The evolution of Irish political culture from the values of conservatism and tradition to a more secular position, is reflected in legislation regarding marriage and reproduction, since the Republic joined the European Economic Community (EEC) (now the European Union (EU)) in 1973. Most of these improvements have stemmed from supra-national rather than national policy-making sources. A brief review reveals that contraception was not legalised until the 1970s (Galligan, 1998; 142). In the 1980s abortion entered public debate at the behest of the far-right who wished to copper-fasten its prohibition in the Constitution (Coakley, 1999; 24). In 1992, following a case where a 14 year old rape victim was prohibited from travelling to the United Kingdom for an abortion, the Supreme Court ruled that abortion should be permitted only if the pregnancy threatened the life of the mother (Gallagher, 1999; 86). The constitutional ban on divorce was finally lifted in 1995 (Gallagher, 1999; 93). Birth rates have declined and female labour force participation rates have increased since the rise of second-wave feminism in the 1970s (Galligan, 1998; 27). However, the average female industrial worker earns only 73% of male wages (at www.ndpgenderequality.ie). Moreover, while the last two Irish Presidents have been female, there has never been a female Taoiseach.[136] Also, women represent only 13% of members of parliament (TDs) and represent only 10% of senior civil servants (www.qub.ac.uk/cawp/). Conservatism prevails amongst Irish leaders:

> 'There is immense conservatism institutionally in Ireland – and leaders are more conservative than even they realise. That's why I believe equality is not a priority until external forces push it and they will struggle against it until they have to do something legally' (Author Interview, R9; 4).

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[136] The Taoiseach is the most powerful political office in the State given that the Republic is a parliamentary democracy.

The remainder of this Chapter discusses the economic, political and social implications of this political cultural base.

5.1.2 The Economic Implications of a liberal state

Economics are at the centre of political priorities in a liberal democratic state. The changing position of women regarding economic status, independence and participation in paid employment are some of the key indicators that the Irish state has adopted a liberal economic strategy in line with EU standards since 1973. Prior to the 1970s, maternal responsibility and cultural expectations, as well as legal impediments such as the marriage bar, banning female labour force participation in the public service on marriage, (lifted in 1973), ensured female economic dependence and consequent subordinate status. In fact, a ban on night work and Sunday work by women was not lifted until 1986 (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton, 2002; 150) a combination of factors, which Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton (2002; 150) identify as, 'a particularly challenging environment for gender equality legislation.' Despite these challenges, there have been a number of significant changes in the economic situation of Irish women over the past 30 years, not least an increase in female participation in the labour market, particularly since the 1990s, as illustrated in table 7 below.

Table 7: Labour Market – Participation Rate (full time) by Gender 1971-1993*

Year	Total Male (%)	Total Female (%)
1971	73.6	26.3
1981	71	29
1983	75.3	31.5
1984	75.1	30.9
1985	74.1	30.5
1986	73.6	30.9
1987	72.9	31.9
1991	66.5	33.5
1992	65	35
1993	67.9	38.2
1994	68	39
1995	68	39.7
1996	68.1	41.4
1997	67.8	42
1998	70.1	44.7
1999	70.9	46.5
2000	71.5	47.8
2001	71.5	48.5
2002	71	49.2
2003	70.4	49

Source: http://www.cso.ie ; Government of Ireland, Statistical Abstract of Ireland 1970-1996. Dublin: Stationery Office; Galligan, 1993, p. 56; Adapted from Ruane and Sutherland, 1999, p. 26; Cassidy et. al., 2002, pp. *LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE: The number of persons in the labour force expressed as a percentage of the overall population. From 1997 onwards figures are an average of quarterly results published in the Quarterly National Household Survey.

Participation in paid employment provides not only financial independence, but is also the key to gaining social status and power in a liberal democratic political system. Under this system, the gender equality agenda has been underpinned by core political cultural values, concerned with competitiveness, the health of the market, resulting in low-cost, voluntary equality measures, where the onus is on the claimant to prove discrimination, rather than on institutions to ensure equal outcomes. For instance, the Employment Equality Act 1998 places responsibility on the claimant, rather than the employer, to prove that (s)he is performing equal work for less pay (Cassidy, Strobl, Thornton, 2002; 152). Every significant gain for Irish women has arisen from primarily economic objectives, since the introduction of equal pay by the European Economic Community in order to standardise competitiveness between France and her fellow members (Author Interview, R13, July 2002; 1; Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton, 2002; 2).

> 'Economics dictates and it always did. In the past countries relied on economic sources to survive. The social stuff is always on the side, an add-on' (Author Interview, R19, August, 2002; 1).

However, while economic imperatives have precipitated the introduction of equality measures, they have not translated to equal economic benefits for women, as evidenced by the persistence of a considerable gender pay gap. The fact that the income gap between male and female workers persists suggests that liberal ideals of equality of opportunity for the abstract individual have not produced parity of income for Irish women. This is due to the influence of factors beyond the liberal model, for which the concept of the abstract individual cannot accommodate. Structural obstacles include biological issues such as the

fact that only women can give birth. Socially ascribed gender identities convert this biological division of labour into socially ascribed roles in terms of caring for children from birth onwards, none of which is paid work.

Table 8: Ratio of Female-Male Hourly Earnings in Ireland (various years) 1970-1997*

Sector	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Manufacturing Female-male hourly earnings	0.56	0.61	0.69	0.67	0.69	0.70	0.71	0.73	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.75
All industries Female-male hourly earnings				0.67	0.68	0.68	0.69	0.70	0.71	0.72	0.73	0.73
Note: The earnings information before 1985 is for manufacturing industries only. Since 1985, the CSO has produced an expanded all industries series that includes manufacturing, mining, quarrying, turf production, electricity, gas and water supply. Sources: Central Statistics Office (Ireland), Statistical Bulletin (1989); Durkan (1995); Ruane and Sutherland (1999).												

* This table is taken from Cassidy, M., Strobl, E. and Thornton, R. (2002; 156).

The exclusion of women from the labour force, and subsequent struggles to reach parity of either representation or remuneration, can be traced to their ascribed cultural status at the foundation of the state; when employment was a scarce resource and family values were

recognised as the mainstay of Irish political culture, women were expected to leave the labour force on marriage, their primary career being to raise a family.

> '...mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home' (Constitution of Ireland, Article 41.2.2).

Not surprisingly, the result has been that many early feminist campaigns focused on the right to work and equal pay (Galligan, 1998; 70). Most of the policy around gender also became focused on ensuring women had the right to work. However, the lack of concern with the demands of roles and responsibilities already ascribed to women in Irish political culture meant that few women could compete with a male norm that took unpaid female labour for granted. Women were expected to fulfill their domestic duties first. One respondent, a policy-maker of 30 years experience recalls:

> 'I had to deal with extreme prejudice. There was the marriage bar at the time and we had to argue with men who at the time wouldn't conceive that women had the right to work' (Author Interview, R24, September 2002; 1).

While such deliberate opposition to mother's participation in the labour market may have reduced significantly since the 1970s more recent figures suggest that women still bear the burden of parental responsibility as is demonstrated by table 8.1 which suggests that most lone parent families are headed by women.

Table 8.1: Lone Parent Families with Children aged under 19 by sex of Parent

			000 families
Year	Male	Female	Total
1994	7.9	52.8	60.7
1995	8.2	56.1	64.3
1996	8.4	60.1	68.5
1997	8.1	65.6	73.7
1998	9.1	83.6	92.7
1999	9.8	78.3	88.1
2000	10.2	93.3	103.5
2001	10.3	103.2	113.5
2002	11.5	103.4	114.9
2003	9.8	104.1	113.9

Source: CSO QNHS (at http//: www.ndpgenderequality.ie)

In the past, economic arguments have been used in many different ways, in order to resist change regarding female paid economic activity. The campaign for the introduction of equal pay legislation in the 1970s was opposed by employers' organisations on the grounds that it would mean more costs for businesses already struggling against an economic recession (Galligan, 1998; 77). Nowadays, Irish women have the right to work, and to equal pay. Equality legislation is promoted by the Office of the Director of Equality Investigations and the Equality Authority.[137] However, economic imperatives are still the first factor to be considered in prioritising policy-making. The focus on quantitative justification makes it easy for government and policy-makers to argue that gender equality policy is non-essential and as such does not merit capital investment in the same way as education, health or infrastructure might (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton, 2002).

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[137] For a detailed review and assessment of the impact of equal pay legislation see Cassidy, M, Strobl, E. and Thornton, R. (2002) 'Gender Pay Differentials and Equality Legislation in the Republic of Ireland' *Canadian Public Policy* Vol. XXVIII Supplement 1; 2002.

More recently, a series of developments in global capital, and specifically the economic success of the EU, has led to labour supply shortages being identified as an impetus for the introduction of gender mainstreaming policy, as a means of attracting and keeping women in the labour force (Author Interview, R1, February 2002; 1).

> 'It's very difficult to mobilise the labour supply. It was identified that women returners were needed' (Author Interview, R7, July 2002; 3).

At the national level, labour market shortages have undoubtedly contributed to current concerns regarding childcare, flexible working arrangements and balancing work and family life.[138] These issues have also become the concern of government and employer's organisations.[139] A number of pieces of legislation designed specifically to keep women in the labour force have been passed - the Maternity Protection Act, 1994, the Adoptive Leave Act, 1995 and the Parental Leave Act, 1998. In short, gender policy has always been subject to more dominant mainstream policy concerns, particularly employment, labour market supply and demand and general economic growth. For this reason, prominent feminist scholars in the Republic of Ireland have long argued that political priorities will not alter until women are equally represented at decision-making level.

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[138] Economic imperatives have provided an impetus for changing gender roles in the past. Primary school teachers were exempted from the marriage bar in 1958 because of a shortage of teachers at the time (Connolly in Galligan, Ward and Wilford, 1999; 80).

[139] A number of Task Forces and Working Groups have been established to deal with equality issues relevant to economic prerogatives. These include the Expert Working Group on Childcare, which led to the National Childcare Strategy and the Commission on the Family (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 31). Zappone...

'A serious commitment by political leaders to progress is required in order that the voice and needs of one half of the population are adequately catered for in the Irish political system' (Galligan in Coakley and Gallagher, 1999; 317).

5.1.3 Gender and Political Participation in Ireland

The Irish political system is characterised by governmental control of legislation, a centralised bureaucracy, disciplined parties and more recently a system of social partnership (Galligan, 1998; 3). Factors such as incumbency, electoral experience and membership of a political family are rewarded at the polls (Galligan, Laver, Carney, 1999). Traditionally, this system has been almost exclusively male, and female political representation remains at the margins of Irish politics. (See Table 9 below).

Table 9: Dáil Eireann Election Results by Gender 1973-2003

Year of Election	Number of Women	Number of Men	% Women
1973	4	140	3
1977	6	142	4
1981	11	155	7
Feb 1982	8	158	5
Nov 1982	14	152	8
1987	14	152	8
1989	13	153	8
1992	20	146	12
1997	20	146	12
2002	22	143	13

Source: Centre for Advancement of Women in Politics at http://www.qub.ac.uk/cawp

Feminists mobilising during the second wave of the 1970s pursued an agenda of equal rights within established structures (Galligan, 1998; 54). This approach sought legal reform to deal with the separate issues of 'women' in various categories of Irish life. This contrasted with movements in other countries which sought much more fundamental shifts in the balance of power in society (Galligan, 1998). Since the 1970s, the movement for gender equality in Ireland operated within a 'women's rights' agenda that was successful to some degree, but failed to achieve the equal outcomes for which feminists had hoped (Galligan, 1998; 170)[140]. To some extent, this feminist heritage makes the introduction of gender mainstreaming in Ireland all the more pertinent as the aims of gender mainstreaming, and plans for its implementation go beyond the initial aspirations of the women's movement in Ireland.

In the absence of either a critical mass of female politicians, or of a similar number of male politicians with a substantive interest in the area of gender equality, the women's movement has carved quite a powerful niche for itself in the policy market place (Galligan et. al., 2000).[141] The participation of women in Irish politics has tended to be politics within the informal, or non-governmental sector, mainly through voluntary organisations, women's groups or auxiliary roles in central political institutions. Though, there have been some gains within established political institutions such as the minimum quota for women on state boards, which while still well short of the 40% target has increased female board

[140] For a detailed review of the activities of the women's lobby since the 1970s see Galligan, Y. (1998) *Women and Politics in Contemporary Ireland: From the Margins to the Mainstream* London: Pinter.

[141] For instance, at a conference of NGOs prior to the Beijing +5 conference in New York 2000, two alternatives to the official national reports were accepted by the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform from NGOs. Representatives of non-governmental organisations also formed part of the Irish delegation in New York (Beijing +5 Conference for NGOs, Dublin Castle, May 12th 2000).

membership to an average of 29% in 2002.[142] However, a survey conducted by the NWCI in 2002 revealed that only 12 of 47 key state boards and public bodies had over 40% female membership (NWCI, 2002; 16-17). The following table summarises male and female participation rates on regional health boards. Women have not managed to reach a critical mass in terms of representation on health boards despite the large numbers of women working in the health sector as doctors, nurses, cleaners, nurse's assistants etc.

Table 8.2 Male and Female Participation Rates on Health Boards, 2002.

Health Board	Men	Women	% Women
Eastern Regional Health Authority	38	15	26
East Coast Area Health Board	13	5	28
Northern Area Health Board	14	5	26
South Western Area Health Board	16	7	30
Midland Health Board	24	5	17
Mid-Western Health Board	20	5	20
North-Eastern Health Board	27	3	10
North-Western Health Board	17	3	15
South-Eastern Health Board	24	7	23
Southern Health Board	27	6	18
Western Health Board	23	8	26

Source: National Women's Council of Ireland (2002) *Irish Politics: jobs for the boys!* Available at http://www.nwci.ie

Difficulties encountered in penetrating formal decision-making structures has led the women's movement to pursuer alternative means of seeking change. In essence, since the recognition of gender equality as a policy problem by European Community initiatives in the 1970s, the women's movement has sought to extend the remit of gender equality policy beyond employment to create a "woman-friendly" state (Gardiner and Leijenaar, 1997; 60). Mazey and Richardson's (1995) extensive work on EU policy-making recognises the prominence of interest groups in the development of the EU as a supra-national policy jurisdiction (Mazey and Richardson in Rhodes and Mazey, 1995). It is

[142] For a detailed account of membership of state boards by gender see National Women's Council of Ireland (2002) *Irish Politics: jobs for the boys!* Available at http://www.nwci.ie

now seen as a matter of course that pressure groups seek to influence public policy at European, national and international level. This is certainly the case for the Irish women's movement, which constantly presses for the implementation of progressive policy at national and international level. A common tactic is to highlight national inadequacies, thereby lobbying for the imposition of supra-national improvements in equality legislation. The result has been to achieve some advancement on all levels. In fact, some writers have attributed credit for many of the advances made in equality policy, at both national and supra-national level since the 1970s, to the women's movement (Galligan, 1994; Hoskyns, 1988; Lovenduski, 1986). In short, together with the leadership of international policy jurisdictions, feminist demands have led to appeals for gender equality policy to become a recognised and substantive area of policy-making and ultimately politics itself. To what extent have new modes of policy-making via social partnership facilitated the integration of gender policy?

While policies in the Republic of Ireland initially tended to focus on 'women's issues' such as reproductive health, childcare or employment equality (Galligan, et.al., 2000), by the mid 1990s, gender mainstreaming became a priority across all policy areas from health and education to marine and natural resources. The move towards a social partnership mode of policy-making in the Republic of Ireland from the mid 1980s onwards was partly responsible for the changed status of equality in Irish policy-making (Murphy in Coakley and Gallagher, 1999; 279). Government engagement with social and economic interests, including in recent years the 'Community and Voluntary Sector' has provided legitimate means of communication between government and feminist and women's representative

organisations such as the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI) (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 23).[143] The current partnership agreement 'Programme for Prosperity and Fairness' gave rise to the National Development Plan 2000-2006 calls for a more integrated, strategic approach to policy-making. The process of reform through negotiated policy-making has created some space on the policy-making agenda for gender mainstreaming. Social partnership has also been identified as a key contributor to Ireland's recent economic boom, and has expanded to include more groups and more voices with the establishment of the National Economic and Social Forum, a Community and Voluntary Pillar in 1993 (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 29).

> 'With the implementation of Partnership 2000, with its unique social pillar, the number of interest groups associating with government has grown quite substantially' (Murphy in Coakley, and Gallagher, 1999; 291).

The established National Economic Social Council, comprised of traditional social partners, however is seen to have more direct influence, especially as the National Economic and Social Forum's role is limited to monitoring and consultative capacity. This hierarchy has seen the partnership process come under some pressure as exclusion of the Community and Voluntary sector from NESC decisions beyond an 'invitation to comment,' has resulted in gendered decision-making as women are

> 'under-represented in the traditional social partners. Failing to include the Community and Voluntary sector reinforces the marginalisation of women within

[143] See Murphy, G. (1999) 'The Role of Interest Groups in the Policy-making Process' in Coakley, J. and Gallagher, M. (eds.) *Politics in the Republic of Ireland* London: Routledge (PSAI). pp. 276. for a detailed account of social partnership agreements since the 1980s.

the policy process' (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 31).

This situation came to a head in March 2003 when the National Women's Council of Ireland felt obliged to withdraw from negotiations for the next partnership agreement on the basis that the Council 'was now being excluded from a number of different areas,' including the monitoring committee of the National Development Plan, the programme through which gender mainstreaming is being implemented (Holland, K., *Irish Times*, Monday, June 23, 2003). Nevertheless, the process of social partnership has played a key role in legitimating the voice of previously excluded feminist organisations now represented by the National Women's Council of Ireland, which has played an important role in national agreements since 1996, when it assisted the Irish government in preparing for Beijing (Ward, 1999; 229). For the purposes of this thesis, an examination of the most significant pre-gender mainstreaming publication on gender, the Second Commission on the Status of Women, reveals how the power dynamic between women and patriarchal institutions has changed in recent years.

5.1.4 The Second Commission on the Status of Women (1993)

There have been two Commissions on the Status of Women since the foundation of the State. The political impetus came from women's organisations and feminist activists, who successfully lobbied government on both occasions. The First Commission was appointed

by the Minister for Finance in 1971.[144] Ministerial appointed non-governmental organisations, political parties and trade union members were requested to make recommendations to improve the status of women, particularly those in a situation of disadvantage. The recommendations of the Commission Report reflected the subordinate social and economic position of Irish women at the time. The Commission report

> 'led to the introduction of a range of welfare measures to assist 'deserted wives,' prisoner's wives and elderly 'spinsters'' (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 41).

Despite the obvious failure of the Commission to conceptualise gender relations beyond stereotypical sex roles, the First Commission represented a landmark beginning for second-wave feminists in the Republic.

> 'I suppose the key events would have been the establishment of the First Commission and joining the EU' (Author Interview; R13, August, 2002, Q1; 1).

The Second Commission, established in 1990 was drawn together by the Taoiseach with terms of reference to report on the implementation of recommendations of the First Commission and to recommend legislative and administrative procedures through which Irish women could participate equally at all levels in society. Special attention was to be given to women working in the home (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 41). The Commission reported with 211 recommendations in 12 Chapters relating to the following issue areas: constitutional and legal issues; women in the home; women and work; women and childcare; women in situations of disadvantage;

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[144] First Commission on the Status of Women. (1972), *Report to the Minister for Finance*, Dublin: Government Stationery Office.

rural women; participation, politics and policies; culture and sport; education; training and labour market initiatives; health; review of recommendations and suggestions in 1972 Report of the First Commission on the Status of Women (Second Commission, 1993; 7). Many of the recommendations were potentially transformative of existing gender relations, particularly those relating to constitutional and legal issues, as reflected in the response of one policy-maker when asked to assess the recommendations of the Second Commission:

> 'Some of them were very important. For example the recommendations of constitutional reform, some, of course, have been legislated for, these were very important' (Author Interview, Re, March, 2000; p. 1).

However, most of the recommendations did not question the prevailing liberal rights framework for equality, preferring to recommend methods for adding women to established structures than proposing re-structuring of Irish political and social life.[145] While a gender equality monitoring committee with a remit to report on progress regarding implementation on an annual basis was established, the overall outcome of the Second Commission was a list of often incoherent or mutually exclusive priorities with no systematic strategy of implementation.

> 'The recommendations of the Second Commission were very aspirational and unfocussed' (Author Interview, Rh, March, 2000; p. 1).

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[145] Such unconscious acceptance of patriarchal language later made it difficult to 'translate' gender mainstreaming. 'Sexist language is unconscious. You come across very resistant aggressive types who don't see the point of all this. They don't see the male norm as having anything wrong with it. There is a male code of language and women often feel uncomfortable with that. I know men who say that they even phrase things differently if a woman is present' (Author Interview, R4, July, 2002; 4).

For instance, the 211 recommendations were listed as equally important though some dealt with constitutional issues needing substantial political and cultural change (such recommendations calling for the introduction of divorce), while others related to issues for a particular group of women such as the provision of public lighting on rural roads. The monitoring and evaluation framework for the report was unclear and inadequate. It was difficult for the recommendations to become government policy as there were no time limits or commitments tied to their adoption. Also, there was no provision for updating of recommendations as policy evolved. The report became time-bound as economic growth pushed the policy agenda forward quite quickly during the 1990s. In short,

> 'Static recommendations became dated and overtaken by political, social and economic developments' (Galligan, et.al., 2000; 20).

The Gender Equality Monitoring Committee produced only three reports over a ten-year period. The quality of these reports was questioned on two grounds. Firstly, the reports were criticised for failing to provide a substantive critical analysis of progress on recommendations. Secondly, effectives targets and timetables for action were never clearly established (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 41). However, the Second Commission did make a small number of very significant recommendations, not least the recommendation that each Memorandum for Government, the official channel for setting out general strategies and proposals on a specific policy issue, should be examined for the impact it may have on women (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 45). While there are some doubts as to the seriousness with which policy proposals are examined for gender at cabinet level (Author Interview; R19, September, 2002), the introduction of this gender-proofing practice may

have provided some level of openness to the widespread proofing requirements necessitated by a commitment to 'mainstream gender.' The final progress report on the Second Commission was published in 1999. By this time the Gender Equality Monitoring Committee, under the leadership of equality policy-makers at the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform had decided that indicators of progress on gender equality were necessary in order to make the transition from a woman-centred equal rights to a gender mainstreaming agenda. The terms of reference of this research was to establish the status of the 211 recommendations of the Second Commission Report and to develop performance indicators for gender equality that could be used to develop a national plan for women and a strategy to mainstream gender. This report was published the following year.[146] This report signalled a new era in Irish gender equality policy-making, rendering the Second Commission on the Status of Women obsolete in a new era of 'gender mainstreaming.' The rising status of gender as an important area of Irish policy-making is observable in increased resourcing of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform over the past 10 years.

5.1.5 Resources and Investment in Equality

The changing status of gender and women in the Republic of Ireland is also reflected in the level of direct investment in gender equality, which in terms of both time and

[146] As mentioned earlier, I was a member of the research team that produced this report, entitled, Galligan, Y., Ward, M., O'Donovan, A., Carney, G. and Schon, E. (2000) *Development of Performance Indicators for Gender Equality* Dublin: Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

budgetary concerns has significantly increased since 1993. It is difficult to quantify exactly the increase in direct and indirect investment in gender equality as it is rarely recognised as a distinct policy concern in its own right. Therefore, while investment in housing, childcare or legislative reform may have a more immediate impact on one gender, it is not always possible to pinpoint exactly whether the impetus for this impact originated from the women's lobby, international pressure or domestic government. I have chosen to report investment in equality where possible between 1993 and 2003 as this covers the time period I am concerned with when applying data to the central research hypotheses. Moreover, the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, from which most of the initiative regarding gender policy has emanated was established in 1993. This was the Republic's first department directly concerned with equality apart from the Ministry for Women's Affairs established in the Department of an Taoiseach in 1982 and disbanded in 1987 (Author Interview, R2, June 2002; 1). Mahon and Morgan (in Galligan, Ward and Wilford, 1999) recognise the limited potential of the Ministry for Women's Affairs 1982-1987 given its marginalised position within the bureaucracy and diminutive budget (Mahon and Morgan in Galligan, Ward and Wilford, 1999; 62-3). A similar problem was identified for the Department of Equality and Law Reform established under Mervyn Taylor, TD in 1993.

> 'The problem was that ten years ago when the department was set up we had no money. We had a very small staff and resources when we were the department of Equality and Law Reform and couldn't really do much more than tidy the pieces of legislation that were immediately relevant' (Author Interview, R3, July 2002; 2).

The Department has undergone a number of significant developments since its establishment, a merger with the Department of Justice in 1997 produced the new Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform – an increase in status and profile that is significant when it comes to negotiating with other departments:

> 'We have money and resources now because we are part of a big department like Justice and that makes us one of the main players. There is no comparison between the budget of Equality and Law Reform now with the budget of Equality and Law Reform when it was independent. Now we are one of the main players' (Author Interview, R3; 5).

This is especially the case when one considers that in Irish policy-making departmental status is attributed on an ability to gain resources, so the establishment of even *ad hoc* investments such as the Second Commission on the Status of Women, eventually led to the permanent financing of the National Women's Council of Ireland which represents a permanent (if external) presence for gender issues in the policy-making landscape, a significant development given the growth of social partnership as a policy-making method in the Republic. Indeed, quite a sophisticated equality infrastructure has developed since 1993. The establishment of supporting bodies like the Employment Equality Agency, itself expanded beyond employment to form the Equality Authority in 2000, and the Office of the Director of Equality Investigations is vital under a prohibitive legislative agenda.

> 'In an ideal world gender mainstreaming would be the right way to go about it. It would be great if you were starting from scratch, then you could do it. But we have

a legal base that is prohibitive, we legislate against rather than for things' (Author Interview, R9, July 2002; 3).

Table 11 provides a snapshot of investment in equality infrastructure between 1993 and 2003. Investment in an equality infrastructure is significant as it establishes an institutional presence for equality policy, and a community of policy-makers concerned with promoting their particular area. As such, it represents a capital investment on which future smaller investments can be made to develop the equality sector. The gradual

Figure B: Investment in Equality Relative to Other Departments by Year 1993-2003

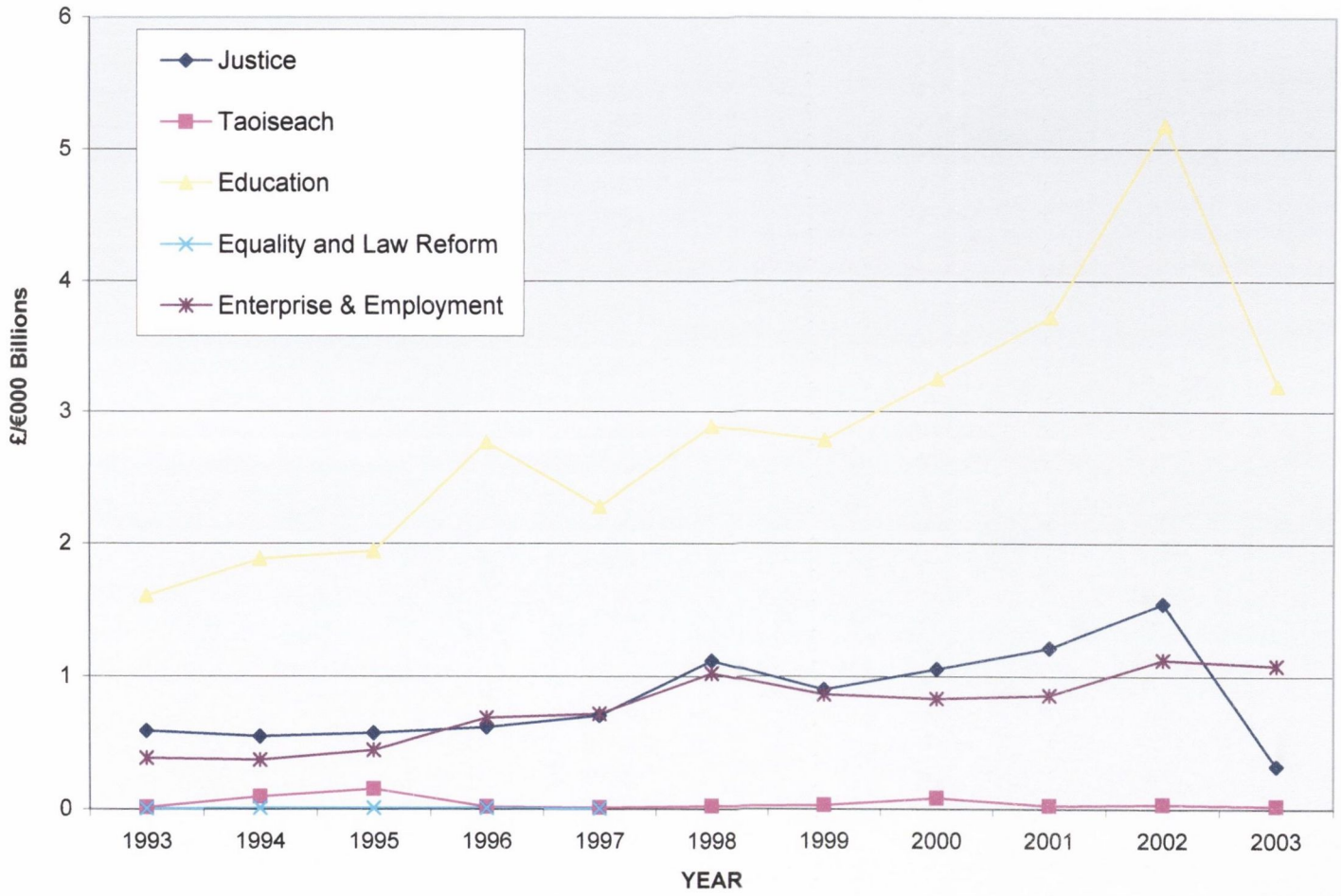

Table 11: Investment in Equality Infrastructure by Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform

Allocation of Funds for and Law Reform 1993-1996 and as section of J/ELR 1996-2003	**1993 £000**	**1994 £000**	**1995 £000**	**1996 £000**	**1997 £000 J/ELR**	**1997 £000 (ELR)**	**1998 £000**	**1999 £000**	**2000 £000**	**2001 €000**	**2002 €000**
Employment Equality Agency (1993-2000)	339	434	474	500	870	298	568	2,210			
Equality Authority (2000 onwards)									2,145	3,987	4,533
Office of Director of Equality Investigations								220	961	1,558	1,622
Equal Opportunities including Childcare						522	2,815				
Gross Total for J/ELR (including other services)	6,045	10,647	12,229	11,768	41,229	39,168	60,242		91,466	167,847	319,135

Source: Department of Finance *Revised Estimates for Public Services* (annual volumes 1994-2004) Dublin: Stationary Office.

Table 12: Investment in Gender by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform 1993 – 2003[1]

Allocation of Funds for and Law Reform 1993-1996 and as section of J/ELR 1996-2003	**1993 £000**	**1994 £000**	**1995 £000**	**1996 £000**	**1997 £000 J/ELR**	**1997 £000 ELR**	**1998 £000**	**1999 £000**	**2000 £000**	**2001 €000**	**2002 €000**
Grant for Commission on the Status of Women	63										
Grant in Response of European Conference on Women Elected Representatives		25									
Grant for NWCI	114	161	170	170	85	85	200	295	418	519	587
Childcare		250	800	800	522	300	2,815[2]	4,986	9,218	30,338	58,417
UN Conference on Women		15	20								
Divorce Referendum			30								
Violence Against Women					101	35		149	232	107	311
Equality Monitoring/Consultative Committee							22				
Gender Mainstreaming and Positive Action for Women									143	2,400	6,533

[1] Source: 'Office of the Minister of Justice, Equality and Law Reform' in Department of Finance, *Revised Estimates for Public Services*, 1993-2004 (annual volumes).

[2] Figure for 1998 represents 'equal opportunities including childcare'

increase in the budget of the Equality department over the past ten years bears testament to the value of establishing a permanent position of marginal areas in mainstream policy institutions,

> '...money from the justice side went to prisons, probation service and the Guards, and we got funding for childcare and something that (named policy-maker) dreamed up called the Equality For Women Measure[147]...So really everything had to be created from scratch, it's a bit like being an entrepreneur' (Author Interview, R2; 8).

Table 12 outlines a breakdown of spending on gender equality. Increases in budget allocations for the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform over the past 10 years are outlined in Figure B above. While increased funding is vital, policy-makers in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, recognise the implication of inclusion of its strategies in a co-ordinated plan like the NDP.

> 'The big difference was that this time the funding was part of a strategic plan. Money with a plan is much better than just getting money' (Author Interview, R2, June 2002; 4).

Funding for equality is listed as part of the Employment and Human Resources Development Operational Programme.

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[147] 'The Equality for Women Measure supports work that is specifically focused on improving opportunities for women in Ireland. The Measure is funded by the Irish Government and part-financed by the European Union, under the National Development Plan 2000-2006. The Measure is administered by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform' (at http://www.ewm.ie).

Table 13: Employment and Human Resources Development Operational Programme Expenditure 2000-2006

Total Plan 2000-2006 (€million)	Total Public and Private Cost[148]	Total Public Cost[149]	Total Public Funding (Exchequer)	EU Funding (Structural Funds)
Employability	5,880.8	5,880.8	5,236.2	617.6
Entrepreneurship	981.4	524.4	428.8	95.6
Adaptability	5900.2	5,900.2	5,738.9	161.3
Equality	257.2	257.2	251.4	5.8
TOTAL	12,563	12,563	11,682.4	880.0

Source: Adapted from Government of Ireland (2000) *National Development Plan* Dublin: Stationery Office. p. 240.

It is evident from Table 13 above that explicit expenditure on equality is significantly less than other areas of the Employment and Human Resources Development OP amounting to just over 24% of total Operational Programme expenditure (NDP, 2000; 238). Therefore, equality as a sub-measure is even more insignificant in terms of expenditure on the NDP as a whole, amounting to just under 5% of the NDP's €51 billion budget. This funding is broken down into constituent parts, of which gender is just one aspect of equality to be supported. Nevertheless, the inclusion of equality as a strategic priority for the Plan is significant when one considers that gender mainstreaming aims to permeate every

[148] State, EU, Public/Private partnership and private funders.

[149] State, EU and Public/Private partnership.

measure and priority through a process of gender proofing. Therefore, strategic investment in equality under headings like technical assistance means that limited resources could have huge implications right across the plan and therefore across a wide range of departments and agencies.

Table 14. Expenditure: Selected Equality Measures under the National Development Plan

Measure	**(€ million)**
Vocational Training and Pathways to Employment for People with Disabilities	222.2
Equal Opportunities. Access to education and training programmes	27.3
Refugee Language Support Unit	4.5
Equality for Women Measure	29.5
Childcare (regional programmes)	317.4
Community Development and Family Support Measure	321

Source: National Development Plan, 2000, pp. 192-3.

However, there are problems with this strategic approach. One important observation from table 14 is that gender issues are not always recognised as such in mainstream policy. For instance, childcare is recognised as general equality but not as a gender issue in this table taken from the NDP. In terms of implementation, gender is implemented as part of a broader 'social inclusion' commitment within the NDP, and also as one of the horizontal issues.[150] No explicit funding is recognised for horizontal issues in the NDP. The lack of direct funding allocation provides a serious legitimacy issue for the horizontal issues, as

[150] See note 63.

provision of resources signifies the relative status of a policy within the bureaucracy (Eisenstein, 1996; 172). Nevertheless the provision of strategic investment in gender equality cannot be under-estimated in terms of what it signifies about the changing status of gender as a policy priority. To what extent do these changes imply that the Republic of Ireland is adopting international norms?

5.2 Adopting International Norms

The last decade in particular has seen a number of significant changes for gender equality policy in Ireland. Irish governments have acceded to various international gender equality commitments. These include the UN Beijing Platform for Action, 1995 and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Donnelly, 1999; 13). A number of pieces of equality legislation have also been initiated at national level.[151] The demands on Irish policy-makers regarding gender equality continue to increase. The three main blueprints for gender equality policy – the UN commitments, EU directives and national equality legislation demand a broader, more inclusive interpretation and implementation of gender equality by policy-makers.

A process of legislative reform established gender equality policy in the Republic of Ireland from the 1970s onwards. This section includes an analysis of the leadership role of

[151] These include the Equal Status Bill, 1997 and the Employment Equality Act, 1998 (Donnelly, 1999).

the European Union in establishing the legislative framework. The impact of international agreements such as the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination and the Beijing Declaration (marking the introduction of a mainstreaming agenda) is assessed through an analysis of the National Plan for Women (2002), which is the current national policy on gender in the Republic.

In the remainder of this Chapter, arguments surrounding the evolution of gender equality policy in the Republic of Ireland away from a liberal rights/legislative agenda and towards a policy of mainstreaming are developed in terms of evidence provided by the data. The literature reviewed in Chapter 3 relating to language, bureaucracy and norms in international relations provide a theoretical framework within which it is asserted that the introduction of gender mainstreaming represents a significant but ultimately flawed initiative regarding what constitutes the normative base for gender equality policy in the Republic.

5.2.1 Equality Legislation since the 1970s

The introduction of recent pieces of equality legislation – the Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000 – has significantly changed the framework for equality in the Republic of Ireland (Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 34). Not least because these acts are informed by a differentiated notion of

equality, especially the Equal Status Act, which extends the remit for equality beyond labour market concerns for the first time. Perhaps the most significant change has been the move from a narrow, woman's rights agenda, to a broader more inclusive definition of equality on many levels, of which gender is but one. Moreover, the definition of gender equality *per se* has been expanded to encompass a diversity of women. The Equal Status Bill sought to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the travelling community. CEDAW also requires that periodic reports cover several categories of women: women with disabilities, traveller women, refugee women and married women (Donnelly, 1999; 114).

In recognising the complex nature of gender and the social constructions that result, feminists have identified equality as a particularly challenging area for contemporary society (Meehan and Sevnhuijsen, 1991; 3). Theorists have identified a number of different manifestations of equality. 'Formal equality' refers to the equal rights equality formula, 'social equality' relates to equal access to welfare and 'equal opportunity' refers to equality of access (Bussemaker in Meehan and Sevnhuijsen, 1991; 53). However, all of these approaches have been criticised for failing to address the deep-seated biases suffered by a wide variety of women in a democracy designed to male specifications (Meehan and Sevnhuijsen, 1991; 19). Therefore, the challenge is to provide a version of equality that is sensitive to gender, class and ethnic differences, but at the same time in keeping with democratic claims of universal citizenship.

'Democracy implies equality but, when it is superimposed on an unequal society, it allows for some people to count more than others' (Phillips, 1993; 91).

In attempting to institute equality across society, modern gender equality policy seeks to provide equality of outcome to a diversity of women across class and ethnic divides.[152] Viewing politics from the perspective of a 'cross-cutting issue'[153] such as gender equality policy reveals the hierarchies, boundaries and structures that oppose full and equal democratic participation. Gender mainstreaming represents a significant change in the policy and practice of the Irish state on gender issues, which were traditionally tackled with positive action measures and *ad hoc* legislation.[154] This is mainly attributable to the fact that the Republic of Ireland's political culture has long been dominated by a strong Catholic ethos (arguably of a patriarchal leaning) (Coakley and Gallagher, 1999; 35) and hence has defined gender in narrow terms. Since the 1970s, a combination of liberal feminist agitation and membership of the EEC prompted a number of pieces of equality legislation (Gardiner, 1997; 72). While legislation played a role in the gradual emancipation of Irish women, it did not question the conservative gender norms of Irish society. Therefore, when viewed as the culmination of many years of feminist thought, the potential of 'gender mainstreaming' to expand concepts of equality beyond democratic theory is recognised. In essence, gender mainstreaming represents the methods and practices by which feminist theories of substantive equality seek to establish equality as

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[152] Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty recognises that equality for women and men is a basic democratic principle, and all member states' policies must include an equal opportunity dimension Ministry of Social Affairs and Health Finland, *Gender Mainstreaming: the State of Gender Equality on the Eve of the 21st Century* Working Group Memorandum:1999

[153] Boyle, Richard (1999) *The Management of Cross-cutting Issues* Dublin: IPA

[154] 'In an ideal world gender mainstreaming would be the right way to go about it. But we have a legal base that is prohibitive, we legislate against rather than for things. In the past you heard people coming out with the most ludicrous things. But now even if they think it, they know that it is not acceptable to say things. So I would say that we have a legal and cultural framework that works against gender mainstreaming. If you compare the Irish with the French approach. The French legislate for rights, so people know their rights' (Author Interview, R9, July 2002; 3).

one of the fundamental organising principles of society (Galligan et. al., 2000). There are a number of policy actors that have played key roles in the maturation of gender equality policy in an Irish context. The following discussion outlines how these players combined to achieve the level of policy sophistication evident in modern gender equality policy.

The Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1975 was designed to meet EU standards for equal pay. The Employment Equality Act 1977 provided legal redress for discrimination in relation to employment, promotion, and training opportunities on the grounds of gender or marital status (Galligan and Carney, 2001; 8). This legislation had the administrative support of the Employment Equality Agency, which was established to ensure that the 1977 Act was fully enforced (Galligan and Carney, 2001; 8). The ethos behind these legislative changes was a liberal conception of equality as a right of opportunity rather than outcome. This ensured that Irish women, while protected from discrimination under law were never relieved of the burden of 'female' responsibilities in the home (Author Interview, R16, August 2002).[155]

> 'Contested areas became the nature of motherhood, the right to control fertility, sexual oppression, and women's role in the family versus their potential public roles' (Connolly in Galligan, Ward and Wilford, 1999; 85).

The legislative framework provided freedom for women to be 'equal' to men. However, the norms and gender identities on which Irish political culture were founded were never questioned. The established liberal institutional framework for equality, conceived of equality for free-thinking individuals, rational agents unimpeded by emotional ties and

[155] The result is that childcare is still a major issue for trade unions in the Republic (Author Interview, R16, August, 2002).

cultural expectations. This conception of 'equality' did not, in terms of outcome, provide even the equal status for which second-wave feminists had fought, as evidenced in the review of the Second Commission on the Status of Women (1993). Whatever the inadequacy of pre-mainstreaming gender equality policies, the existence of broadly shared belief in gender equality as a general principle provided a climate in which epistemic community and international (EU) initiatives could devise strategies to promote gender equal policy practices at the domestic level.

5.2.2 The Role of the European Union

Ireland's decision to join the EEC coincided with many changes in the position of Irish women (Galligan, 1998). Until Ireland joined the EEC in 1973, the Irish Constitution's provision of 'separate spheres' for male and female activity dominated policy-making and legislation. EEC Directives established Irish gender equality policy within the labour market (Donnelly, 1999; 29). This is illustrated in Table 15 below.

Table 15: European Community Directives for Gender Equality

Year	Directive	National Legislation
1974	75/117/EEC	The Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act, 1974
1977	76/207/EEC	The Employment Equality Act, 1977
1985	79/7/EEC	Social Welfare (no. 2) Act, 1985
1990	86/378/EEC	Pensions Act, 1990, Part VII
1998	96/34/EEC	Parental Leave Act, 1998

Source: Donnelly, 1999; 28

The origins of European equality policy lie in Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome, 1957, which states that member states must ensure "equal pay for equal work" (Hoskyns in Elman, 1996; 15).[156] The three directives passed in the 1970s followed from the EEC's renewed commitment to equality at that time.[157] The Equal Pay Directive (75/117) of 1975, the Equal Treatment Directive (76/207) and the Social Security Directive (78/7) were all to have repercussions beyond their original remit of employment (Mazey, 1988; 69). For instance, the directive on working conditions gave prominence to the issue of childcare, and the social security directive highlighted the status of "dependent" which so often defined women in the member state's welfare systems (Hoskyns in Elman, 1996; 18). EU directives led to the introduction of equality legislation and the establishment of equality policy as a legitimate governmental aim. Moreover, they clearly established the EU as an international jurisdiction for gender equality, capable of providing a legislative framework for gender equality that was far more radical than could be achieved within the constitutional confines at national level.

The impact of the EEC on gender equality in Ireland ultimately leaked out beyond labour market issues, which had formed the basis for equality. Constitutional amendments required for membership ensured that any State measures needed to implement Community directives would be exempt from constitutional inquiry. In effect, Community

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[156] The substance of this article was put to the test in the now famous case of a Belgian air stewardess who resisted compulsory retirement. In the case of *Defrenne vs. The Belgian State* the European Court of Justice over-ruled the Belgian state court proclaiming that Community law "may be relied on before the national courts" (in Mazey, 1988; 68; Hoskyns, 1996; Lovenduski, 1986). The Community, through the European court, had taken its first stance against a member state in the name of equality. This established the EU as a separate policy jurisdiction for gender equality policy.

[157] 1974 saw the launch of a social action programme by the community. For the first time an EEC resolution recognised the social and political meaning of equality between the sexes, and acknowledged the relationship between paid labour and family responsibilities (Reinalda in Gardiner, 1997; 213).

law now supercedes national legislation (Donnelly, 1999; 12). Significantly, this has made it a focus of activity for Irish feminists, given the patriarchal basis of Irish constitutional law.[158] The importance of this amendment in progressing the equality agenda is illustrated by the delay of the 1997 Equal Status Bill and the Employment Equality Act, 1998 on the basis that they were deemed to be unconstitutional (Donnelly, 1999; 29). There is no doubt that the events of the past 40 years have established the European Union as a supra-national policy jurisdiction for gender equality. While the EU may occupy a crucial role in the pursuit of gender equality by Irish policy-makers, international agreements have also contributed to the expansion of gender equality policy into mainstream policy.

5.2.3 International Agreements

> 'As well as the EU, other international organisations, such as the United Nations, have encouraged the conclusion of international agreements relating to equality between the sexes' (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 8).

It is generally acknowledged in the academic literature and amongst policy-makers that it is difficult to identify the extent to which International Agreements, which have no basis for legal redress if states choose not to implement them, influence state activities regarding gender equality. Nevertheless, states do participate in UN sponsored conferences and sign up for international agreements. Over 100 countries signed up for the Beijing Platform for Action. In 1999, 165 countries, including the Republic of Ireland had

[158] See Connelly, A. (ed.), *Gender and the Law in Ireland.* Dublin: Oak Tree Press.

signed up to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) making it

> 'the second most widely subscribed international human rights treaty in existence.'[159]

Other International Agreements include the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions on Underground Women's Work, Equal Pay and Protection of Motherhood, Discrimination in Employment and Occupation, and Workers and Family Responsibilities (Beveridege, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 8). There is evidence that States do act on International Agreements, primarily because they are expected to report periodically to UN committees. In this sense, international agreements do promote certain norms of state behaviour. For instance, in the Irish case, both the project to develop performance indicators for gender equality, published by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (1999) and the National Plan for Women (2002) were funded, organised and published because the Irish government felt compelled to report on progress regarding the Platform for Action at the Beijing +5 summit in New York, May 2000. Therefore, while the extent to which International Agreements impact on national level policy is dependent on political commitment at the national level, the National Plan for Women and previous research are evidence of activity arising directly from the Platform for Action.

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[159] http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/protocol/optional.htm

5.2.4 The National Plan for Women (2002)

The agenda for gender equality established by the Platform for Action in 1995 identified a number of concrete mechanisms by which gender equality could be achieved. One of the key mechanisms for establishing gender equality at the national level was through the establishment of a national plan for women.

> 'The Report to the UN on the National Plan for Women 2002 is Ireland's response to the invitation to governments made in the Political Declaration by the United Nations General Assembly in New York in 2000 to develop and implement national action plans to work towards the advancement of women in all areas of society' (National Plan for Women, 2002; 5).

Moreover, the Chapters of the National Plan for Women (2002) are closely based on the twelve critical areas of concern outlined in the Platform for Action at Beijing. Poverty, education and training, health care, violence against women, conflict, economic inequalities, decision-making, mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, media portrayal of women, environmental concerns, the rights of girl children. Preparation of the National Plan for Women (2002) was also conducted in line with UN requirements to consult women on a national basis. The consultation was extensive and submissions were so numerous that the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform felt compelled to publish two reports. The official report, entitled, *Report to the United*

Nations on the National Plan for Women 2002 on the Implementation of the Platform for Action (2002) and also a document entitled, *Aspirations for Women collected in the course of the consultation process on the National Plan for Women (2002).* This second report resembles the Second Commission Report (1993) (referred to earlier), as it contains a large number of suggestions, often contradictory, but representative of the 335 women's groups and individuals who felt compelled to contribute to their National Plan. It is explicitly recognised that this document is not government policy:

> 'Because this document (Report to the United Nations on the National Plan for Women 2002 on the Implementation of the Platform for Action) was so much part of governmental policy we had to make a distinction between it as a policy and the aspirations gathered during the consultation process. The Aspirations document is not government policy so it does not have the same status' (Author Interview, R23, December 2002; 1).

The Aspirations document is said to:

> 'give a valuable and unique insight into the views and aspirations of the women of Ireland at the beginning of the new millennium. This will serve to guide and influence government policy' (National Plan, 2002; 6).

Recognition of the official status of the UN report over the aspirations document suggests that some gender issues are a current concern of Irish legislators, certainly more so than in 1993.

The National Plan for Women (2002) is an international requirement closely adhered to by national officials, who will use the plan to develop a National Women's Strategy (2003-2010) as outlined in UN commitments (Author Interview, R23, December 2002; 1). The National Plan for Women (2002) would certainly seem to suggest that Irish governments and policy-makers have conformed to international norms regarding the development of gender policy. The question now is whether official recognition of gender inequality as a policy problem has any observable impact on the effectiveness of policies developed to address it. Close examination of the National Plan for Women (2002) reveals that under each Chapter there is a list of governmental activities already in place. Each programme, measure or strategy is presented in a way that suggests that the main purpose of its inclusion is to give the impression that women are core beneficiaries. The plan appears to be a melange of existing policy-making activities, some of which arise as a result of increased governmental commitment to gender equality. However, the Plan does not convincingly establish itself as a coherent and co-ordinated strategy for the advancement of women. There are no spending commitments listed. Nowhere does the plan suggest that policy will be altered as a result of commitments laid out in the plan. In a sense then, while it is significant that the plan is official government policy, this commitment is diluted by the fact it amounts to policy only because it has already been introduced by other means, or due to pressures other than the need to address the issue of gender inequity. Take for example, the first Chapter of the National Plan for Women, entitled 'Women and Poverty'. The nine commitments to address women and poverty listed in the plan are primarily due to the existence of either social partnership, the National Anti-poverty Strategy, family-friendly policies emerging from a labour shortage or EU social

protection commitments (National Plan for Women, 2002, pp. 7-9). Is this an example of the co-optation of feminist ideas by mainstream institutions so frequently identified in the feminist literature on gender mainstreaming?

In many ways it is difficult to answer this question. Obviously, if the National Plan is nothing more than the re-iteration of existing policies then it would seem that at most government is using international commitments as a cloak of legitimacy to hide the fact that there is in fact, no coherent national strategy to address the exclusion of Irish women from the power and privilege of public life. However, perhaps a less jaundiced interpretation of the plan would note the fact that government commitments on equality have extended over the past 30 years to the point where they can fill a report addressing international gender norms as critical. Moreover, the government did engage in an extensive consultation process in order to, at least attempt, to incorporate the opinions of Irish women in the plan, though many of these suggestions were later downgraded to inclusion in the Aspirations document. Nevertheless, policy-makers involved see the National Plan as an important development. While they were under general orders to implement the Beijing commitments, each commitment necessitated an individual push.

> 'The first task was to get the government to agree. The first thing we did was launch the Draft National Plan for Women – this provided a basis for the consultation process. We provided €250,000 in a large number of small grants to help groups put together their submission' (Author Interview, R23, December 2002; 2).

The process of moving from vague UN commitment to government policy to which each relevant government department must commit its resources is complicated and time-consuming.

> 'When you draft a memo for government you circulate it with appendices to all the relevant sections and divisions in each government department and once it has been through the co-ordination section somebody at top level (Secretary General) in the relevant department has to sign off on it - making sure that their Minister agrees with it' (Author Interview, R23, December 2002; 2).

In conclusion, it seems fair to say that at the very least the National Plan for Women (2002) provides an accurate summary of the current agenda for gender equality policy in the Republic of Ireland. It is most effectively viewed as a precursor to future development of the National Women's Strategy and should be recognised as a beginning on the path towards developing a coherent national policy on gender.

> 'The plan is much wider than gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is part of the plan not the other way round. The National Plan for Women will become the National Women's Strategy and this contains gender mainstreaming and the Equality for Women Measure and equality legislation and lots of other things. I suppose it represents a national policy on gender equality' (Author Interview, R23, December 2002; 4).

5.3 Conclusion: Evolution from Women's Rights to Gender Mainstreaming

Fundamental changes in the political culture, economic system and policy-making agenda over the past 30 years provided a policy environment amenable to the adoption of international gender norms in the Republic of Ireland in 1996. There is nothing to suggest that gender mainstreaming is a national initiative in the way that the Second Commission on the Status of Women or the establishment of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform are. However, it is evident that domestic initiatives like these were necessary prerequisites to gender mainstreaming. An in-depth examination of domestic factors leads to a more nuanced understanding of the dynamic interactive relationship between domestic and international factors in the adoption and implementation of international norms. For instance, the almost unquestioning adoption of a liberal conception of equality is best viewed as a reaction to the extreme conservatism and patriarchy of post-independence Irish political culture, as was the case in many post-colonial states (Kiberd in Murray 1997). The legislative programme that emerged for equality on foot of this modernist and liberal movement from the early 1970s was forged by a combination of EU leadership and domestic dissatisfaction on the part of Irish women. Ironically, the hot pursuit of equality by legislative means indirectly precipitated the introduction of a thoroughly different programme for equality – gender mainstreaming. The impetus behind gender mainstreaming emerged from the legitimacy provided it by association with supranational government and international organsiations, but again domestic factors played an important role in identifying that the recipe for legislative reform had disappointed in terms of delivering equality of outcome. The defining link between

domestic and international actors, institutions and circumstances in the introduction of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland in 1996 is liberalism.[160] Liberalism as a value is at the core of the paradoxical consequences of many of the initiatives on gender equality over the past 30 years.[161] The move from a collectivist political culture which valued family over the individual, economic protectionism over prosperity and duty over freedom, to a post-colonial liberal democratic state that expounded the virtues of liberty, individual rights and economic growth meant that liberal ideology permeated every aspect of modern Irish political life.[162] In terms of gender, a form of liberal feminism developed an ideological and practical commitment to the reform of existing political and economic institutions. The liberalisation of the economy precipitated membership of the European Union, which led to a cascade of equality directives and subsequent legislation that is widely recognised as one of the single biggest factors in the transformation of Irish gender relations.

There are problems with a liberal conception of equality, many of which are demonstrated in the Irish case. Firstly, a liberal democratic conception of individual rights works on the proviso that all individuals are equal under the law.

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[160] Liberalism is generally viewed as purporting the most acceptable approach to challenging patriarchal power, given its focus on formal equalities (Phillips, 1987; 5-6). This may be why it is the most popular basis on which to promote women's rights amongst national governments and international organisations.

[161] Such paradoxes include the patriarchal endowment of the 'widow's inheritance' of dead politican's parliamentary seats at a time when married women were barred from employment in the public service. For a discussion of Irish women's political representation before and after the liberalisation see Galligan, Y., Knight, K and Nic Giolla Choille, U. (2000) 'Pathways to Power: Women in the Oireachtas, 1919-2000' in McNamara, M. and Mooney; *Women in Parliament Ireland: 1918-2000* Dublin: Wolfhound. Also, see Galligan, Y. (1998) *From the Margins to the Mainstream: women and politics in contemporary Ireland* London: Pinter on the role of liberal feminism in gaining formal equality for Irish women.

[162] Key milestones in the modernisation and liberalisation of Irish political culture and the economy were joining the EEC (1973), lifting the marriage bar (1973), lifting the ban on divorce (1995) and revelations of corruption and abuse in the Catholic patriarchy (1980/1990s).

> 'Liberalism pretends we can be equal in the public sphere when our differences are overwhelming in the private: it exhorts women to apply for jobs while treating the babies as a private affair' (Phillips, 1987; 15).

Irish liberalism worked on the implicit assumption that all individuals were equal under current structures. However, for the reasons identified by Phillips (1987) liberal democratic institutions and a liberal feminist women's movement had no means to argue that established political and social structures, such as breadwinner-homemaker domestic arrangements provided intractable obstacles to the equal participation of Irish women in any substantive sense.[163] Phillips (1987) argument, and the one I am applying here is not that the priority given to economic prosperity is directly linked to a liberal conception of equality, but rather that a liberal conception of equality, by virtue of being applied only to the public sphere, cannot take account of obstacles emerging from activities undertaken in the private sphere. In terms of outcome, this conceptualisation of equality means that women and men are equal until they become parents and the decision must be made as to who will undertake family work. In the Republic of Ireland, this system of equality was established and then governments began to prioritise economic growth, a feature of neo-liberal rather than liberal policy. Neo-liberal policy tends to commodify labour to the extent where reproductive and caring activities are ascribed a market value on the basis that status and wealth are gained through productive economic activity. Those who cannot afford to pay the market price for childcare are forced to undertake the family work in

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[163] 'You have to see it as a continuum. There were big developments in the 1970s but very little in the 1980s maybe because of economic circumstances. I would have expected childcare to follow through. Why was there no follow through on that? Why wasn't it a proper issue even in the last election campaign? I thought this issue was cracked. We used to get calls from men when I was at the EEA saying that childcare was costing more than the mortgage. If that isn't driving childcare what will. We now have research showing the need for childcare, but it wasn't an issue on the doorsteps in this election and I can't explain why' (Author Interview, R10, July 2002; 3).

addition to employment in the public sphere. The only other choice is to leave productive work, undertake unpaid family work, and become economically dependent on a male bread-winner or the state. In most cases, the person faced with the choice are women.

This more recent turn to neo-liberalism has led arises from a pre-occupation with economic prosperity which has been the policy focus of Irish governments for the past 35 years. Following 800 years of British oppression and ineffectual policies of economic protectionism following the foundation of the state, it is not surprising that Irish political figures proclaimed economic growth as the future of the Republic. A reliance on economic growth as a primary electoral and political priority resulted in equality being tagged onto more 'important' goals such as the eradication of unemployment in the 1970s and 1980s and more recently as a means of remedying labour supply issues during boom time.

The adoption of gender mainstreaming as the main strategy for the achievement of gender equality in the Republic of Ireland in 1996 was directly in line with international norms regarding gender equality at the time. The participation of Ireland at the UN world conferences on women (1975-1985) and subsequent accession to treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1985), and later the Beijing Commitments and the Platform for Action in 1995, paved the way for Irish adoption of gender mainstreaming (Galligan and Carney, 2001; 8). The relative failure of a liberal rights framework for gender equality, centred around the reform of legislation, to produce the 'equal status' for which second-wave (1970s) feminists had

fought, left Irish policy-makers and institutionalised feminists amenable to international gender norms. Reform of the legislative framework had provided freedom for women to be 'equal' to men. However, the norms and gender identities on which Irish political culture were founded remained those of a post-colonial nation struggling to establish its national identity, firstly through clerical nationalism, and later through the modernising principles of liberal individualism (Kiberd in Murray, 1997; 85).

> 'Given the basically conservative nature of Irish politics and society, and given the significance accorded to the adherence to moral values as interpreted by the Catholic Church, Irish feminism was unlikely to develop a radical political perspective' (Galligan, 1998; 44).

In this sense, the Irish case is illustrative of True's (2001; 2) argument that

'nation-states traditionally have provided few spaces for women's organizing or for the articulation of women's interests' (True, 2001; 2).

In the absence of an egalitarian political culture, Irish feminists have traditionally looked to international organisations as providers of political legitimacy and economic and institutional support for feminist projects (Ward, 1999; 247). As a result, the combination of limited resources in the women's movement and limited political interest in gender amongst national level elites led to the adoption of the globally popular gender mainstreaming project in the Republic of Ireland.

> 'The idea has been adopted and it's moving into the discourse of policy-making, but I wouldn't say its being completely implemented' (Author Interview, R1, February 2002; 1).

The new discourse is one where a policy of mainstreaming, rather than women-centred policies is pursued. It remains to be seen whether the new discourse of 'mainstreaming' is a more effective mechanism for the achievement of gender equality. Whatever the outcome in terms of equality, there is little doubt that gender mainstreaming has implications for the organisation of policy-making in the Republic of Ireland.

> 'There has been a tendency in the civil service to reply to the question 'Why do you do it that way?' with 'Because we have always done it that way...' But I think that is changing and things like mainstreaming are making people change their whole approach to work' (Author Interview, R7, July 2002; 5).

The evolution from a women's rights to a gender mainstreaming policy-making agenda constitutes a paradigmatic shift for Irish equality policy for a number of reasons. Fundamentally, the Irish conception of equality is built on a liberal 'equal treatment' prerogative in line with fellow members of the European Union. The very basis of liberal democracy is that all citizens are equal under the law, and each is accorded rights and liberties on an individual basis. The main criticism of this conception of equality is that it is incapable of coping with unequal outcomes of liberal individualism emanating from the unequal relation of men, women, ethnic minorities and the under-educated to the institutions of liberal democracy arising for both biological and socially constructed/cultural reasons (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 15). Gender roles, socially constructed, but arising from biological imperatives, can result in unequal outcomes despite equal treatment. The most obvious respite from this unequal situation is to accord different status or privilege to systematically disadvantaged communities.

However, this approach proves problematic as measures such as positive or affirmative action are frequently interpreted as unfairly privileging women or ethnic minorities over white, male counterparts. This interpretation is often based on the argument that liberalism guarantees equal treatment and therefore to treat certain groups preferentially is unequal. The long-term impact of this internal liberal paradox is that states and legislative institutions are forced to 'dilute' policies from an equality of outcome to an equality of opportunity approach.

> 'States may often have to be circumspect in their use of such a strategy, resorting to conciliatory language – targets rather than quotas – and often leaving the decision whether or not to use positive or affirmative action to the discretion of individual employers or organisations' (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 15).

Mainstreaming constitutes the replacement of formal or legislative women's rights framework for equality with a substantive strategy for the achievement of equal outcome (Author Interview; R2, February, 2002; 14).

There are a number of conceptual developments that would need to occur in order for mainstreaming to achieve the concrete changes in gender relations, which eluded previous equality paradigms. The first requirement of policy-makers and legislators, as well as feminist activists and theorists is to imagine a social and political culture that was not gendered. Should gender mainstreaming be aiming to achieve parity of representation in established political institutions or seeking to replace established institutions? Are the cornerstones of equality and liberalism capable of achieving the differentiated equality

required to transform gender relations for all categories of women and men? These questions are investigated in the following Chapter.

Chapter Six: 'Real World' Gender Mainstreaming: learning from the Irish Experience

6.1 Introduction

In the Republic of Ireland, gender mainstreaming has been identified as a policy with a number of key components. Firstly, it is a mechanism for government to develop an equality agenda once traditional legislation had reached its limits.

> 'The legislation area developed from the 1970s here and that was expected to deliver everything. Now we realise that we were a bit naïve to think that it could. We've gone through the stages of realising the limits of legislation (Author Interview, R10; 2).

Secondly, gender mainstreaming represents a strategic approach to what is described in policy-making terms as a 'cross-cutting issue' (Boyle, 1999). Thirdly, gender mainstreaming is a concrete plan of action to achieve specific goals regarding the reduction of gender inequality in society (http://www.ndpgenderequality.ie). This approach signifies an acceptance that gender inequality adds a lateral dimension to vertical policy areas such as education, finance, environment and health. Likewise, policy problems such as poverty, social exclusion, transport and planning become all the more challenging once it is recognised that they have a gender dimension. In practice, policy-making around gender involves the coordination of a large number of departments, policy areas and personnel. This Chapter explores each of these challenges through an examination of interpretations and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Irish case.

This Chapter presents an analysis of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland, and reports the main research findings. The Chapter begins by detailing how gender mainstreaming is implemented via the National Development Plan. The process of gender proofing is discussed (FitzGerald, 2003). Conceptual issues underpinning the lack of data in the Irish case are exposed. The Chapter also observes policy-makers' failure to understand gender mainstreaming, and explicitly articulates the communication problems experienced by femocrats and bureaucrats. The exploration of this mainstream/feminist dialogue draws a distinction between gender mainstreaming, gender proofing and other stages in the mainstreaming process. As such, the means by which gender disaggregated data is used to operationalise gender mainstreaming is analysed. The Chapter finds that the transformative capacity of gender mainstreaming as a policy tool is limited in the Irish case, and concludes that these limitations are rooted in the restrictions to equality produced by hegemonic free market economic policy strategies.

> 'The NDP has certain core goals – like continued economic growth - that are clear and these issues are tacked on at the side and it is not clear what their status is' (Author Interview, R21, September 2002; 2).

6.1.2 The Framework for Implementation: the National Development Plan

The National Development Plan (NDP) is a plan to invest over €51 billion in economic growth and social development between 2000-2006. Most of the investment is funded by the exchequer, about €43.2 billion, other funds come from the EU and Public-Private Partnerships.[164] Despite the fact that only 7% of funding derives from the Structural Funds, the Irish government committed to implement gender mainstreaming across all but 6 of the 130 measures implicated in the plan (McGauran, forthcoming) in November 1999.[165]

However, support for implementing 'gender mainstreaming' (or at least gender proofing[166]) was established prior to the launch of the National Development Plan in 2000. The *First Report on Implementation of the Platform for Action* (1996) states that:

> 'there is now a general recognition that policy proposals being made in government need to be gender-proofed' (quoted in Donnelly, Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 45).

Gender-proofing had already been proposed in the Second Commission on the Status of Women (1993). The National Economic and Social Forum emerged with the development of the new social partnership policy-making regime in the 1990s, which culminated in Partnership 2000 (P2000), Ireland's first national strategic plan to explicitly include

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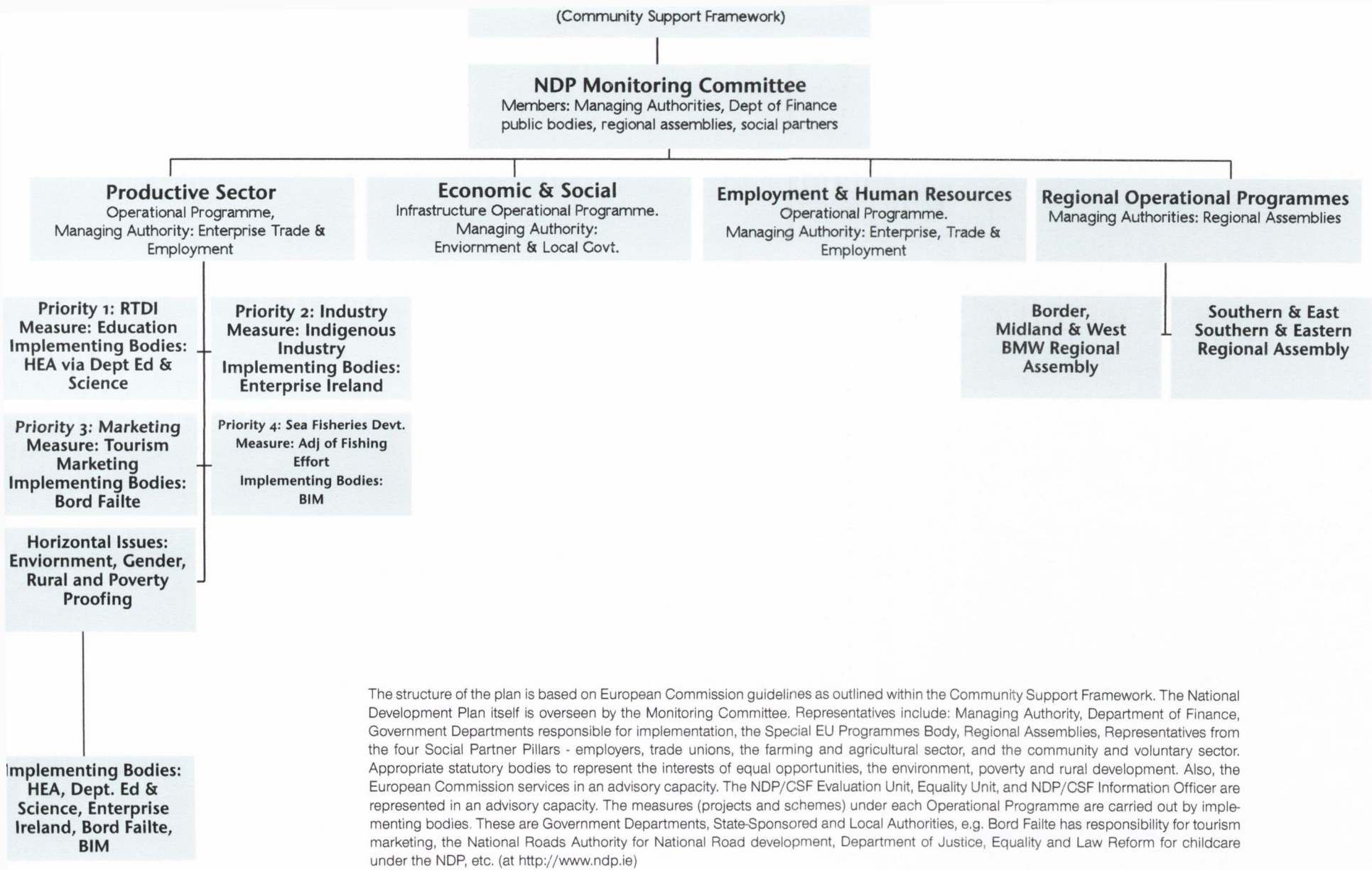
[164] (at http://www.teagasc.ie/news/2001/200104-01.htm)

[165] Exempt categories include waste, waste water, waste management, energy, coastal protection and roads. Gender was deemed irrelevant to such 'hard' policy areas (McGauran, 2003).

[166] Officials recognise gender-proofing as: 'A check out on a policy proposal to ensure that any potential gender discriminatory effects from that policy have been avoided and that gender equality is promoted,' (at http://www.ndpgenderequality.ie).

equality issues and their advocates. This plan, which ran from 1994-1999 recognised gender proofing as a 'socially desirable objective' (Donnelly quoted in Mulally and Smith in Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000; 45), and resulted in guidelines for gender proofing being incorporated into the current plan (NDP 2000-2006). These guidelines are supported with the establishment of a Gender Equality Unit to assist policy-makers to complete gender-proofing documents by providing training and advice (McGauran, 2002; 1). For the first time in the history of the state, gender equality policy is part of a national economic plan, with specific financial and human resources, established to provide a co-ordinated strategy for the establishment of gender equal mainstream policy-making. Developments since 2000 have attempted to move gender proofing beyond the level of 'ticking boxes' by disinterested policy-makers (Author Interview, R3, July 2002; 6) and towards co-ordinated rather than *ad hoc* gender equality policy-making. However, there are still a number of obstacles to be overcome, not least the establishment of a coherent information base on gender, beginning with gender disaggregated data and developing into knowledge of how everyday policy-making can produce different end results for women and men. These obstacles become apparent in the following discussion of the structure of the National Development Plan.

A number of different organisations co-ordinate to implement the programme for government outlined in the 130 measures of the NDP (see opposite). While the broad issues and orientation of policy are outlined in the NDP, once the national budget has been allocated it is up to policy-makers to devise methods of delivering policies. The Managing Authorities identified in Figure A, occupy mainly a record-keeping rather than service



The structure of the plan is based on European Commission guidelines as outlined within the Community Support Framework. The National Development Plan itself is overseen by the Monitoring Committee. Representatives include: Managing Authority, Department of Finance, Government Departments responsible for implementation, the Special EU Programmes Body, Regional Assemblies, Representatives from the four Social Partner Pillars - employers, trade unions, the farming and agricultural sector, and the community and voluntary sector. Appropriate statutory bodies to represent the interests of equal opportunities, the environment, poverty and rural development. Also, the European Commission services in an advisory capacity. The NDP/CSF Evaluation Unit, Equality Unit, and NDP/CSF Information Officer are represented in an advisory capacity. The measures (projects and schemes) under each Operational Programme are carried out by implementing bodies. These are Government Departments, State-Sponsored and Local Authorities, e.g. Bord Failte has responsibility for tourism marketing, the National Roads Authority for National Road development, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform for childcare under the NDP, etc. (at http://www.ndp.ie)

delivery role and as such are responsible for assembling information for monitoring and allocating funding to the programme, providing administrative support to the operational programme and ensuring measures are in compliance with EU regulations. The Managing Authorities have bi-annual monitoring committee meetings to assess the progress of the plan (NDP, 2000; 210). Each priority is the responsibility of a number of implementing bodies: agencies that deliver government services on a day-to-day basis, including government departments who deliver services such as education and health, as well as state-sponsored bodies, local authorities and other agencies. This structure means that most policy-makers implicated in the gender mainstreaming project have no active role in pursuing gender equal policy outcomes. Rather, most are confined to roles as co-ordinators or observers of the policy-making process.[167] Essentially, the Irish policy-making process has interpreted mainstreaming as the practice of considering how all public policies or programmes affect two different groups in society – men and women.

> 'The Irish government has identified 'gender mainstreaming' as a strategy to promote equal opportunities between women and men in the National Development Plan 2000-2006' (NDP Gender Equality Unit, Gender Equality and Transport Handbook, 2001; 1).[168]

In practice, the process of 'mainstreaming' first involves identifying bias through gender impact assessments as part of the monitoring commitments of the Plan.

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[167] The tradition of developing measures to provide accountability in public spending are central to a neo-liberal economic policy where government involvement is minimal so as to ensure 'sustained economic growth' (NDP, 2000; 8).

[168] This interpretation of gender mainstreaming is clearly linked to the liberal 'conception of individuals as free and equal beings' (Mill, (1869) quoted in Phillips, 1984; 6).

Monitoring progress on the NDP is identified as central to achieving impacts from all measures. Gender mainstreaming is explicitly discussed at the Co-ordinating Committee on Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion, which was established in order to avoid the relegation of equality issues to the bottom of agendas on main monitoring committee meetings (Author Interview, R2, June 2002; 9). In general, co-ordinating committees are formed in order to offer coherent advice on policy areas that are seen to have some commonalities in the broader picture of the NDP.

> 'This committee (the Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Committee) doesn't have any decision-making powers. It's an advisory committee to the Community Support Framework, which is the main committee of the NDP' (Author Interview, R2, June 2002; 5).

The fact that this committee exists merely in an advisory capacity reflects the lower status of social inclusion as the least important priority of the National Development Plan. Membership of this committee represents diverse interests - social partners, operational programmes' managing authorities, National Anti-Poverty Strategy policy-makers and representatives of the Equality Authority, who co-chair the committee with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

> 'Many of the social partners are directly involved in the implementation process through occupying positions on monitoring and co-ordinating committees. Each managing authority has its own monitoring committee and the social partners are on that.' (Author Interview, R18, August 2002; 3)

The European Commission sometimes participates in the monitoring process, depending on the extent of EU funding of a particular project. Finally, there are a number of Units

that provide technical assistance on various measures across the NDP, one of which is the Gender Equality Unit.

6.1.3. Technical Assistance: the Gender Equality Unit (femocrats)

The provision of professional and technical support on the process of gender impact assessment is identified as integral to successfully implementing gender mainstreaming. Throughout this thesis, I have clearly identified the role of feminist knowledge in influencing the development of gender mainstreaming conceptually (Chapters 2, 3 and 4). Experience of working in the area of gender analysis and of formulating arguments for the inclusion of women in established structures is a vital attribute of the femocrat for a number of reasons. Firstly, femocrats can train policy-makers so that their understanding of the terminology associated with gender mainstreaming is expanded. Secondly, femocrats can provide personal experience as lobbyists/campaigners or scholars within feminism to establish strong arguments for continuing investment in gender equality. This is especially important in the early stages of institutionalising gender mainstreaming, where one of the key challenges is the lack of statistical information on women's participation rates across policy-making sectors. The role of femocrats as internal critics of established policy-making procedures is in particularly important in jurisdictions where policy tends not prioritise equality as a general societal goal.

In Ireland, this support is provided by femocrats identified as gender experts within the NDP Gender Equality Unit, established within the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in 1999 (Author Interview, R2, June, 2002; 4).

> 'A monitoring unit is (to be) established under the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to monitor gender mainstreaming generally and to advise on the development of appropriate indicators in this regard' (13.37) (NDP, 2000; 224).

The unit is headed by a gender equality expert[169] who advises on gender impact assessment of NDP Operational Programmes (Galligan, 2000; 15). The following table details the staffing of the unit since its establishment in 1999.

Table 15.1: NDP Gender Equality Unit Staff Members, 1999-2003

Time Period	Number of Staff	Type of Staff
December 1999 – March 2000	2	1 gender equality expert, 1 Executive Officer
March 2000 – July 2001	3	1 gender equality expert, 1 Executive Officer and 1 clerical officer
July 2001 – March 2002	4	1 gender equality expert, 1 Executive Officer, 1 clerical officer and 1 statistician
March 2002 – September 2002	3	1 gender equality expert, 1 clerical officer and 1 statistician
September 2002 – December 2003	5	2 gender equality experts, 1 Unit head, 1 Executive Officer, 1 clerical officer and 1 statistician.

Source: McGauran (forthcoming) *Plus ça change...? Gender mainstreaming of the Irish National Development Plan* Dublin: Policy Institute.

The gender equality expert occupies a position of some independence within the Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform as responsibility for the actual implementation of gender mainstreaming procedures remains with individual

[169] The femocrat's official title was 'Gender Equality Expert' until she was re-assigned as Head of the Gender Equality Unit when it was expanded and a second 'Gender Equality Expert' was employed.

departments (Galligan, 2000; 102). This is key to the mainstreaming agenda as it avoids the marginalisation of gender issues to low budget 'women's departments', as has been the case in the past (Galligan, 1998; 62). It is a significant development in terms of the institutionalisation of gender equality commitments, and in the case of gender mainstreaming, the institutionalisation of a feminist agenda.[170] The compulsory examination of policy for gender biased assumptions and possible outcomes, and the presence of a gender expert to oversee the implementation of gender impact assessments is further evidence of the infiltration of feminist ideas, often developed within international organisations, into mainstream policy-making.[171] Organisations such as the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI) offer support and advice to policy-makers while also occupying a watchdog role over the implementation of various equality strategies.[172] The fundamental difference, however, in the mainstreaming approach lies in the fact that, while feminist groups such as the NWCI occupy a powerful lobbying role, this is distinct from the institutionalised position of the 'mainstreaming' *femocrat,* (gender equality expert) who has become part of the policy process, but with the specific aim of improving the status of gender issues, as distinct from women. The presence and actions of the 'mainstreaming' *femocrat* represents the systematic infiltration of mainstream bureaucracy by feminists and feminist ideas.

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[170] More radical conceptions of gender mainstreaming identify it as a as 'a comprehensive feminist critique of power relationships' (Braig and Wölte, 2002; 9) in mainstream policy institutions

[171] Elsewhere, successful implementation of 'gender mainstreaming' has been dependent on the joint advocacy of feminists working both within and outside formal policy-making machinery (True, 2001; 9).

[172] NWCI representatives were prominent members of the Monitoring Group for the Second Commission on the Status of Women, its progress reports and subsequent related reports. They also played an advisory role in preparation for Beijing (Ward, 1999). The NWCI was represented on the NDP monitoring committees until mid 2003.

Policy-makers recognise a number of important roles played by femocrats in making gender mainstreaming effective policy. Firstly, femocrats provide illustrations and examples of how taking a gender perspective could alter policy decisions. It is worth quoting the gender equality expert at length to illustrate this point:

> 'I'm trained in this area but if somebody rings me up from some department and says "I am building a new road, what are the gender equality impacts?" and I told them to read a best practice model guide, they'd never read it and never do anything. But, if I say to them, "Well, you are building a road that's going to benefit people with their own cars unless you have public transport on it. Think about how you could put public transport on this new road and then it will be beneficial for more groups particularly women." That's what you need, specific stuff that's been done and works' (Author Interview, R1, February 2002, p. 12).

The words of the gender equality expert demonstrate two things. Firstly, that gender knowledge requires both knowledge of how gender can lead to inequality, and knowledge of how policy is made. In other words, one needs to know about 1) infrastructure planning, and 2) the implications of gender differences for transport policy, in order to build a gender mainstreamed road. She also clearly states that even with training, this is not an easy task. These findings suggest that the experience of gender mainstreaming policy-making intimate that the building of a 'gender knowledge' base amongst policy-makers is a long-term, educative goal rather than simple a matter adopting a short term training scheme. Another important attribute of the femocrat is that (s)he are employed full-time to make sure that the tasks necessary to make gender mainstreaming policy are being undertaken. It is arguable, that without the presence of the femocrat to remind

policy-makers of their duty to gender proof programmes, the task would be pushed even further down policy-maker's already over-stretched priority lists. Experienced equality policy-makers point out, with irony, that femocrats are necessary because if gender mainstreaming were already being implemented by policy-makers, we would not need it. Therefore, some extra push is necessary:

> 'It is too idealistic to think that everyone will change – like they say of mainstreaming – if it was being done we wouldn't need it. I think you need someone to drive these things' (Author Interview, R21, September 2002, p. 4).

Given the centrality of the femocrat to the process of mainstreaming, senior policy-makers with extensive experience of working on equality, and specifically gender equality issues, noted the danger of marginalizing the gender unit, arguing that the unit would be more effective if located within a central government department rather than an outside body or implementing agency (Author Interview, R2, June 2002; 4).

> 'I argued that it (the Gender Equality Unit) should be part of a government department because I think that's the only way to influence the system, other people thought that it should be part of the equality authority (a government funded independent equality agency) or something, but I argued that we knew how to influence the system in here' (Author Interview, R2, June, 2002).

This thinking is a good example of how important gender knowledge is to the success of gender mainstreaming. The fact that policy-makers at decision-making level had previously worked on gender equality allowed them to use their experience to assess the

fortunes of the proposed unit from inception. Their experience was useful in that fears of marginalization of the Gender Equality Unit in a woman's ministry were echoed by the head of unit herself who recognises the importance of the supportive base for the staff of the unit provided by colleagues in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, despite its subordinate status in terms of the NDP.[173] However, the fact that the Unit emerged from a top-down decision, co-funded by an external body (EU), can be seen as a disadvantage in terms of delivering its goals, as gender mainstreaming has been more clearly requisitioned to comply with broader economic aims. Equality is continually linked with employment issues.

> 'It is the policy of the Government that the increased employment opportunities on foot of investment in the Productive Sector are open to all and that, in particular, female involvement in the workplace, especially in management positions, continues to grow' (NDP, 2000; 145).

While NDP priorities may inhibit gender mainstreaming's development, it must be recognised that the identification of gender mainstreaming with a high profile plan like the National Development Plan is extremely significant as it suggests that gender mainstreaming is a central aspect of current government spending.

> 'We've had lots of gender mainstreaming courses and additional money invested through (name's gender expert's) unit. It is very important that that unit is part of the NDP. The NDP is a big important plan and its good to have the NDP badge (Author Interview, R7, July 2002; 4).

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[173] For a full statement of the status of gender equality, and particularly gender mainstreaming within the National Development Plan see: Fitzgerald, J. et. al. (2003) *op. cit.*

The main activities of the Unit have focused on publishing handbooks, developing a statistical databank to provide benchmarks of the current status of gender equality, providing regular training days for policy-makers all over the country, as well as providing *ad hoc* advice in response to individual queries from policy-makers. All of these tasks are completed in addition to the Gender Equality Unit's constant representation on NDP monitoring committees. The Head of the Unit identifies a primary difficulty as the fact that the five-strong staff of the unit cannot possibly achieve all of its objectives (McGauran, forthcoming).

Officially, the unit was to provide support and strategy development in a number of key areas. These are summarised as follows:

- provide an advisory, training and information service on issues relating to gender mainstreaming the NDP;
- advise on and develop appropriate indicators in support of gender mainstreaming the NDP;
- engage in data collection and data analysis in support of mainstreaming gender equality;
- engage in a research programme to assess and support progress in realising equality of opportunity between women and men arising from the mainstreaming of gender equality;
- advise on gender impact assessment of policy proposals drawn up in the context of the NDP;

- provide expert inputs to the Equal Opportunities and Social inclusion Co-ordinating Committee and to the mid term review of the Structural Funds; and
- support participation by community and voluntary groups in the gender mainstreaming process (McGauran, forthcoming; 48).

Briefly, the Unit has trained over 800 NDP policy makers since 2000. The Unit has published and updated a statistical databank of gender disaggregated data, published a statistical survey on women's and men's use of transport and commissioned a report on gaps in statistical information in relation to disadvantaged groups (McGauran, forthcoming, 51). The Unit has taken suggestions from training days to inform decisions regarding what research needs to be undertaken. Femocrats found that policy-makers wanted short fact sheets with specific examples of the gender implications of their particular policy area, for instance, housing or health. They also published a Gender Proofing Handbook, researched in conjunction with County Development Boards which contained information for policy-makers on what gender proofing is, why it is needed, how it fits with particular policy contexts and details on how to plan a gender proofing programme (McGauran, forthcoming, 51). In 2003, the Unit began a pilot study with a County Development Board seeking to establish gender budgeting of programmes.

> 'Gender budgeting means assessing mainstream budgets in order to determine how much funding benefits women and men' (McGauran, forthcoming; 52).

With regard to advising on gender impact assessments, the Unit provided training days which included examples of how gender impact assessments could be undertaken. The Unit also provided support on the incorporation of equal opportunities into evaluations of the NDP. While the Unit is not a member of the evaluation committees of the NDP, it

provided expert advice on gender for the mid term evaluations of the NDP. A key recommendation of the unit was that more in-house expertise on the horizontal principles was needed in some Operational Programmes (McGauran, forthcoming; 53). Were this recommendation to be adopted there would be femocrats responsible for gender mainstreaming in each individual Operational Programme. This approach would greatly improve the capacity of the femocrats to instigate change as it would mean the Gender Equality Unit would have more time for strategy, planning and research and development as regards gender mainstreaming. Lack of time for reflection and planning, has been identified as an obstacle to producing more gender equal policies by the gender equality expert, a problem also recognised in the literature:

> 'Gender staff bear the responsibility for promoting organisation-wide attention to... gender concerns through advocacy work... staff training, the provision of guidelines and checklists...and monitoring functions. Such responsibilities tend to crowd out the important work of research, policy and strategy development' (Ravazi and Miller, 1995; 3).

It is arguable that these problems arise from the gap between those with knowledge of gender issues (feminists, generally gender scholars) and policy-makers. The problems are exacerbated by the fact that gender and bureaucracy have up until the formation of the unit operated within two separate spheres of politics. Gender politics has tended to be the concern of women, most of who make their arguments from the position of an excluded majority. Bureaucracy, on the other hand, occupies a key role in maintaining existing power systems, which are identified by feminists as gendered (Eisenstein, 1996). This bi-

polar relationship is complicated by the fact that mainstream institutions also function as a provider of resources and funding for feminist groups (see Table 12). This paradoxical relationship is taken to new level with the establishment of a Gender Equality Unit charged with the task of internally auditing the activities of mainstream bureaucracy. The unit occupies the unenviable post of temporary internal auditor of an issue occupying a marginal position on an over-crowded agenda (Author Interview, R3, July 2002; 5). The position of the unit is further complicated by the fact that knowledge of gender issues occupies external sites.[174] Also, civil servants tend to be generalists rather than specialists, rendering gender expertise a rare commodity within the civil service. In effect, the gender equality experts operate as long-term consultants[175] rather than *bona fide* members of the bureaucracy. Moreover, the gender expert does not have the experience of bureaucracy in terms of substantive knowledge of the responsibilities of different departments, individuals, agencies, particular posts or organisations. Most significantly, when she began the work, she had no previous experience of working within a civil service culture, very different from the academic environment where she gained her expertise on gender issues.

> 'The problem is that you need to be an expert on transport to gender mainstream but experts on transport don't know about gender. You then need the gender experts to know about transport so you can't really be an expert on anything, you

[174] Intellectual and activist feminism tends to reside in non-governmental organisations such as the National Women's Council of Ireland and universities. For instance, Dr. Ursula Barry of the Women's Education, Research and Resource Centre at Univesrity College Dublin and Dr. Yvonne Galligan of the Centre for the Advancement of Women in Politics, Queen's University Belfast acted as consultants on two primary tasks: developing the statistical database on gender (Barry, 2000) and performance indicators for gender equality (Galligan, et. al., 2000), respectively.

[175] Two years initially, extended to seven in total.

need to know about everything. You need to be both really' (Author Interview, R16, August, 2002; 5).

Ignorance of certain aspects of the job is identified as a definite problem in terms of effectively implementing policy.

> '...the person recruited did not know how the civil service operated and had minimal internal support networks to draw on, and so was not in a good position at the start to bargain effectively' (McGauran, forthcoming).

This lack of authority is compounded by her temporary status, which in the culture of policy-making in Ireland classifies her as an insignificant player in the long-run. This is a significant disadvantage in the 'job for life' culture of bureaucracy.[176] In short, the status and potential effectiveness of the Gender Equality Unit is decided by a number of pre-determined factors relating to the status of equality objectives in a broader economic plan (the NDP).

The first task of the gender expert on taking up her post was to establish the baseline position of NDP policies regarding gender. Policy-makers were asked to complete gender impact assessment forms for the particular policy area (See table 16 in appendix 3). On foot of disappointing outputs from the gender impact assessment forms, the staff of the Gender Equality Unit identified that their role would have to be one of communication and promotion rather than straightforward policy implementation. They engaged in a series of training workshops to equip policy-makers with the tools necessary to gender

[176] Similar fears are expressed by femocrats elsewhere (Eisenstein, 1996; 207).

proof their policies. At this point in the process, the unit came up against a primary problem with gender mainstreaming as a policy practice - lack of coherent definition:

> '...what bedevils this process and particularly gender mainstreaming is that it is very unclear what that means in practice' (Author Interview, R21, September 2002; 2).

The gender impact assessments disappointed femocrats in a number of important ways. Firstly, as can be seen from Table 16, some policy-makers reported that there were no gender impacts from policies as wide-ranging as the National Employment Service, responsible for co-ordinating training in order to ensure a steady flow of trained workers during times of labour shortage, and to reduce unemployment when jobs were scarce. FÁS, the national training and employment development agency reported:

> 'FÁS is not aware of any significant differences between men and women in the utilisation of its National Employment Service' (Gender Impact Assessment at http://www.ndp.ie).

FÁS also stated that it did not propose to undertake any actions to mainstream gender. From the perspective of producing gender equality this report is disappointing because women's organisations have for years complained that FÁS training programmes always clash with school hours, and transport to training courses is never provided. Awareness that organisational norms (such as the 9am-5pm working culture) are not givens, but constructed in order to facilitate the running of society and economies in a certain way, is necessary if gender mainstreaming is to produce changes in policy outcomes. Those with knowledge of women's issues or gender equality would be aware that lack of transport and clashing with school hours would produce obstacles to mothers working in the home

wishing to avail of re-training. In the long-term, lack of opportunities for re-training is one of the main obstacles to the low skilled becoming economically independent. Mothers in the home are at a further disadvantage if training courses are run at times which clash with home duties. This simple example illustrates how knowledge of how gender identities interacts with institutions to produce unequal access is key to making mainstreaming successful.

Another example of how lack of knowledge as to how gender differences can be obscured and ignored related to the report on the school guidance gender impact assessment form (08., Table 16) which states that as 50% of second level pupils are male, and 50% are female, and all students receive career guidance, there is no need for any mainstreaming actions on this measure. Again, gender and education experts disagree, instead identifying how key differences in the choices boys and girls make, not just about career, but also subject choices at second level, lead to different career paths (ESRI, 1996; 102). Eventually this early separation leads to a sexually segregated labour market and a gender pay gap.[177] Girls tend to choose languages, humanities and arts subjects, while boys are concentrated in the sciences, economics and engineering. Careers in the hard sciences and engineering tend to be better paid than arts, teaching, administration or service industries, where women tend to work after graduation. Therefore, a mainstreaming action on this policy might be to encourage girls to take sciences at leaving certificate and both science and engineering degrees at university. Boys should also be encouraged to pursue a career in the arts, humanities, teaching, nursing, childcare or other female dominated professions.

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[177] For a full exposition of these arguments, together with statistical information on education and equality see Galligan, et. al., *op. cit.*

These measures would help certain sectors becoming feminised, which generally leads to decreasing status, pay and recognition.[178]

These types of responses suggest that policy-makers filling in gender impact assessments needed gender training in order to identify where currently inequalities lie, or may emerge in the future. They certainly suggest that this training must contain knowledge of how gender inequalities are constructed. There are, however, some examples of where gender impact assessment forms demonstrated that policy-makers had thought about the issues at hand and endeavoured to elaborate on why problems may arise. Most importantly some responses even contained some workable proposals for the future. For instance, the ESF Early School Leavers Progression (11A, Table 16) scheme reported some significant gender differences amongst early school leavers. These included the fact that boys were more likely than girls to leave school early, but that girls were more likely to have long absences from programmes if they became pregnant. The gender impact assessment statement states they had begun to provide part-time FÁS courses so that lone parents could attend. Possible mainstreaming actions included a tracking system to keep in touch with young women who become pregnant while on a FÁS programme. They also planned to seek childcare funding for Early School Leavers on FÁS programmes. It is interesting to note that the problem of males leaving the education system early was seen as 'a matter for Education system for persons while still at school.' (Table 16). This response suggests a lack of gender knowledge in relation to masculinities and suggests that perhaps further

[178] A good example of the discriminatory effects of a sexually segregated labour market was offered at a recent conference on women in education where a speaker referred to senior economists pointing out in the past that much time and resources is put into rescuing the fishing industry, as relatively minor economic sector (Bord Iascaigh Mhara, Department of Marine etc.) whereas, hairdressing a vibrant and larger sector has no representation or administrative support in the form of 'An Bord Gruaige' (From discussion at Centenary of Women in Trinity, December 2004, *Accessing Opportunities and Institutions: women in education, administration and policy-making*).

research needs to be conducted by the Gender Equality Unit into why young men are choosing to leave the education system early.

Though incomplete, such substantive and engaged responses to gender impact assessment forms were very much in the minority. Most policy-makers struggled with the concept of gender mainstreaming, and therefore, found it almost impossible to give meaningful or imaginative answers in gender impact assessments. Time and again, the unit found its main role was not only to promote gender mainstreaming, but to attempt to construct a definition of gender mainstreaming that would be meaningful to policy-makers across a broad range of departments and agencies and with diverse interest in (and knowledge of) gender equality issues.[179] Over time the unit learned to use both a carrot and stick approach to promoting gender mainstreaming. It now provides training and advice to policy-makers willing to learn about gender issues, and occupies a watchdog role on monitoring and co-ordinating committees within the National Development Plan. The next section examines programme complements, the basic policy tool of the National Development Plan, to establish why it is that policy-makers have no difficulty understanding economic growth as a prime objective of the National Development Plan, but are so unclear on the implications of gender mainstreaming for their work.

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[179] Issues around creating a shared understanding and common vocabulary on gender mainstreaming were identified in Chapters 2 and 3. Policy-makers identify the importance of understanding the purpose of gender mainstreaming: 'I think the prognosis is variable in such a diverse programme it is hard to say anything else. Gender mainstreaming training is good because it helps people to learn what it means' (Author Interview, R12, July 2002; 5).

6.1.4. Gender Proofing: Programme Complement Texts

Gender-proofing is the concrete mechanism by which gender mainstreaming is implemented, and programme complement texts[180] are the most important documents in implementing individual measures of the NDP (McGauran, forthcoming). Each programme complement outlines the conditions and types of funding; it is essentially a finance plan for that particular measure.[181] The programme complement also itemises the criteria under which projects are selected, which organisations will spend the monies allocated as well as performance indicators and funding monitors (McGauran, forthcoming). The programme complements include information on each of the 'horizontal issues' – poverty, environment, rural development, North-South co-operation and equality. Analysing the programme complement texts for a variety of measures reveals why policy-makers may find little motivation to engage with gender proofing. Firstly, it is apparent from the programme complements that the main tasks to be performed are an established part of the policy-making remit. They are necessary parts of the job. The auxiliary position of gender (and other horizontal issues) gives the immediate impression that they are a lower priority in terms of the general goals of the NDP. The fact that the impetus for mainstreaming gender derives from sources beyond the national level is also apparent:

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[180] See copy of Programme Complement in appendix.

[181] The focus on financial planning is typical of neoliberal policy-making.

> 'The Commission's guidelines indicate equality for men and women is a basic democratic principle underpinned by the Treaty of Amsterdam. Its incorporation into all policies is therefore no longer an option but an obligation. Mainstreaming equal opportunities must therefore be introduced into all Structural Funds programming. This involves both efforts to promote equality and specific measures to help women and the mobilisation of all general policies by actively and openly taking into account at the planning stage their possible effects on the respective situation of women and men' (NDP, 2000; 222).

Governmental commitment to gender mainstreaming in the NDP is never more forcibly articulated than this. Therefore, arguments about the lack of motivation amongst policy-makers could be easily linked to the lack of kudos or credit or any kind of incentive to gender proof effectively. Of course, the question as to why there is no kudos in making a career out of gender mainstreaming is linked to the fact that gender equality is added on *post hoc* to broader economic strategies which form the backbone of Irish policy-making.[182] This is a problem when one considers that the success of a policy like mainstreaming is dependent on its champions pushing it through an otherwise inhospitable policy environment.

> '...they've (policy-makers) only had somebody chasing them up to do this for two years. And, you don't change the activities of government departments in two years, absolutely no way. Some places they are doing things and that's usually due

[182] Similarly, one femocrat reported to Eisenstein (1996; 191) that the replacement of social liberalism with economic rationalism (neo-liberalism) as the dominant ideology in Australian politics 'kept things squeezed off the agenda' 'One example was the introduction of performance indicators' (Draper in Eisenstein, 1996; 191).

to committed people inside. Your champions, if you like, who push it for you inside an organisation' (Author Interview, R1, February 2002; 11).

The effectiveness of programme complements as a policy-making tool are most clearly measured when one speaks with agency officials trying to report on the implications of particular measures for gender. Moreover, the record-keeping (rather than policy-making) role of the Managing Authorities becomes apparent.

'As far as gender mainstreaming is concerned we work through the programme complements, harassing departments to try to put things into programme complements. We (the managing authorities) are the middle man trying to drive things' (Author Interview, R12, September 2002; 2).

Given that much of the experience of implementing gender mainstreaming (at least in 2002) rested at those working in an advisory or monitoring capacity it is impossible to gauge to what extent programme complements reflect anything of the extent to which gender mainstreaming has been successfully adopted. The number of layers of bureaucracy between the Gender Equality Expert and actual policy delivery, combined with an absence of a credible and communicable conception of gender mainstreaming, would suggest that the NDP is generally problematic as a framework for rolling out a policy like gender mainstreaming.

'There are some goodwill indicators but, for example, if you look at a measure on the regional airports it is no good counting how many men and women use it because you can't design a programme to change the way these programmes are

run when you are giving small money for lights and things like that...'(Author Interview, R12, September 2002 ;3).

The apparent unsuitability of the National Development Plan as a vehicle on which gender is to be mainstreamed demonstrates the obstructions to communication that exist between feminist conceptions of gendered bureaucracy and the daily grind of service provision and public spending that is the environment of most policy-makers. The main problem with the NDP framework for implementing gender mainstreaming identified in this thesis relate to the broad political parameters limiting the effectiveness of the NDP as a vehicle for 'social inclusion' given the incompatibility of aims like gender mainstreaming with the neo-liberal paradigm that guides policy development and implementation in the Republic.[183] Central to neo-liberal policy-making is the link between investment and evaluation. Eisenstein (1996; 189) recognised this link as ultimately detrimental to pursuing a feminist policy agenda. Moreover, Eisenstein's (1996) description of the implications of neo-liberalism for Australian policy bears a strong resemblance to the current approach to policy-making in the Republic of Ireland.

> 'These included: (1) the "devolving" of responsibility for managing resources from central agencies to individual departments...(2) the imposition of performance indicators by which a bureaucrat's work is assessed; (3) the introduction of the "generic manager," (4) an emphasis on outputs rather than inputs. Finally, they included programme budgeting, in which allocations were stated in terms of

[183] For a full discussion of how Irish political culture developed from clerical politics accompanied by protectionist economic policy to the current regime of secular nationalism with a neo-liberal economic agenda see Kirby, P. et. al., *op. cit.* 'The economic stagnation of the late 1970s and 1980s, the backlash of the hardline Catholic Right in the 1983 and 1986 referenda and the continued bloody toll of violent conflict in Northern Ireland throughout the same period provided a powerful impetus for maintaining and for elaborating the different constitutive elements of the modernising, neo-liberal orthodoxy' (Kirby, Gibbons and Cronin in Kirby, Gibbons and Cronin, 2002; 3).

overall policy objectives, rather than in terms of individual departmental functions' (Eisenstein, 1996; 186).

The neo-liberal response to policy-making is to identify a policy 'problem,' work to secure resources to provide measures to alleviate the problem and then evaluate how that money is spent. The result is that policy-makers spend a lot of time allocating resources and tracing public money, and developing methods of policy assessment and money-saving measures. Little time is spent working out whether the best policy has been devised. The result is a culture of policy measurement (rather than design) where the impact of a policy is assessed in relation to its output rather than its long-term impact on important social problems. This problem is clearly recognisable in an examination of the role of data gathering in the process of gender mainstreaming.

6.2 The Role of Data

The following discussion examines the role of data in the actual implementation of gender mainstreaming. The section concludes with a discussion of how data, while integral to the mainstreaming process, is influenced by pervasive ideological leanings across Irish political culture. This section of the Chapter also argues that multiple conceptions of the purpose of gender-disaggregated data amongst Irish policy-makers represents the point in

the mainstreaming process where the bifurcation of feminist and state interests is observable through dichotomous interpretations of what constitutes 'relevant' data.

Data is deemed necessary for any policy monitoring measure in the Republic of Ireland (Crowley quoted in Barry, 2000: 2).[184] The process of mainstreaming gender in the Republic of Ireland is still being initiated, so efforts are being made to establish the baseline position of men and women in relation to conventional policies, and to develop means of monitoring progress on gender mainstreaming.

> 'All we can do here at the moment is to try to collect some data and try to find out what is happening. Now I want them[185] to know that we are open to this thing and that we want to do it but that it is just very hard' (Author Interview, R6, July 2002: 2).

So, Irish policy-makers are struggling to build the foundations necessary to mainstream gender, by gathering data on how women and men participate in programmes and differentially benefit from policies. The gender expert identifies data as an important aspect of her work. She offers an example of how data relates to her central role in promoting gender mainstreaming as a policy initiative. Statistics are important in demonstrating to policy-makers that ascribed gender identities produced disadvantaged

[184] Niall Crowley is the Chief Executive of the Equality Authority. 'The Equality Authority is an independent body set up under the Employment Equality Act 1998. It replaced the Employment Equality Agency, and has a greatly expanded role and functions. The Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000 outlaw discrimination in employment, vocational training, advertising, collective agreements, the provision of goods and services and other opportunities to which the public generally have access on nine distinct grounds. These are: gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief and membership of the Traveller Community. Discrimination is described in the Act as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated on any of the above grounds' http://www.equality.ie/aboutus.shtml.

[185] The repondent is referring to staff in the NDP Gender Equality Unit.

status for women in relation to transport. While policy-makers found it easy to relate transport issues to personal circumstance, remarking that: 'my wife can use the car any time she wants' (Author Interview; R1, February, 2002: 14); a survey was necessary to convince policy-makers that investment in better public transport links could help women access opportunities.

> 'when we went out and got a survey done of adults in Ireland and their transport use then we saw that 40% of women have driving licence and 60% of men and that was just completely unarguable with... you need this data to show that there are gender equality differences' (Author Interview; R1, February, 2002: 14).

Her sentiments demonstrate that it is recognised amongst Irish policy-makers and in the literature (Beveridge, Nott and Stephen, 2000: 390; Bretheron, 2000: 62) that data is a central tool in justifying the introduction of gender mainstreaming. Given the importance ascribed to data, it is not surprising that the absence of gender-disaggregated data is identified as an obstacle to the development of gender mainstreaming (Author Interview, R1, February, 2002: 14).

In a more general sense, the current preoccupation with gathering gender-disaggregated data is related to impetus from international fora:

> 'A gender equality database should be developed for the purposes of developing advanced indicators for monitoring progress of women under the 12 critical areas of concern in the Report to the UN on the National Plan for Women 2002' (Report to UN on National Plan for Women, 2002: 59).

The question of why so little gender-disaggregated data exists is again linked to the liberal individualist conception of equality on which Irish policy is built. Since the 1970s, data on women has not been collected on the basis that it did not reflect the spirit of the equality legislation introduced on foot of EEC membership (Author Interview, R6, July 2002: 1). The fact that no gender-disaggregated data was gathered during the era of equality legislation suggests that women were not considered contributors to Irish economy or society in the public sense. The liberalisation of Irish economy and society since the 1970s also signifies the beginning of a liberal conception of equality where all citizens are deemed equal under the law. As such, the gender of the abstract individual involved in economic, social and political participation was deemed irrelevant. The outcome of this conception of equal citizens regardless of biological sex was the division of the nation into two groups.[186] The first group are those who participate freely in the market and democratic institutions, but were protected from inequality by legislation governing public bodies and the labour market. The second group comprises of citizens who live outside public institutions, unprotected from equality legislation, occupying roles outside the labour market and mainstream institutions. The political cultural heritage of the Irish state[187] produced a situation where most individuals in the latter group happened to be women. So, the issue of data is important in the development of gender mainstreaming, not just because it offers a convenient example of obstacles to building gender mainstreaming tools, but also because the absence of data provides a means of identifying

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[186] In recent years (1997 onwards) a number of categories of oppression beyond gender have been recognised by the Irish State. These include, age, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, membership of the travelling community, race, disability, and class (Barry, 2000: 6).

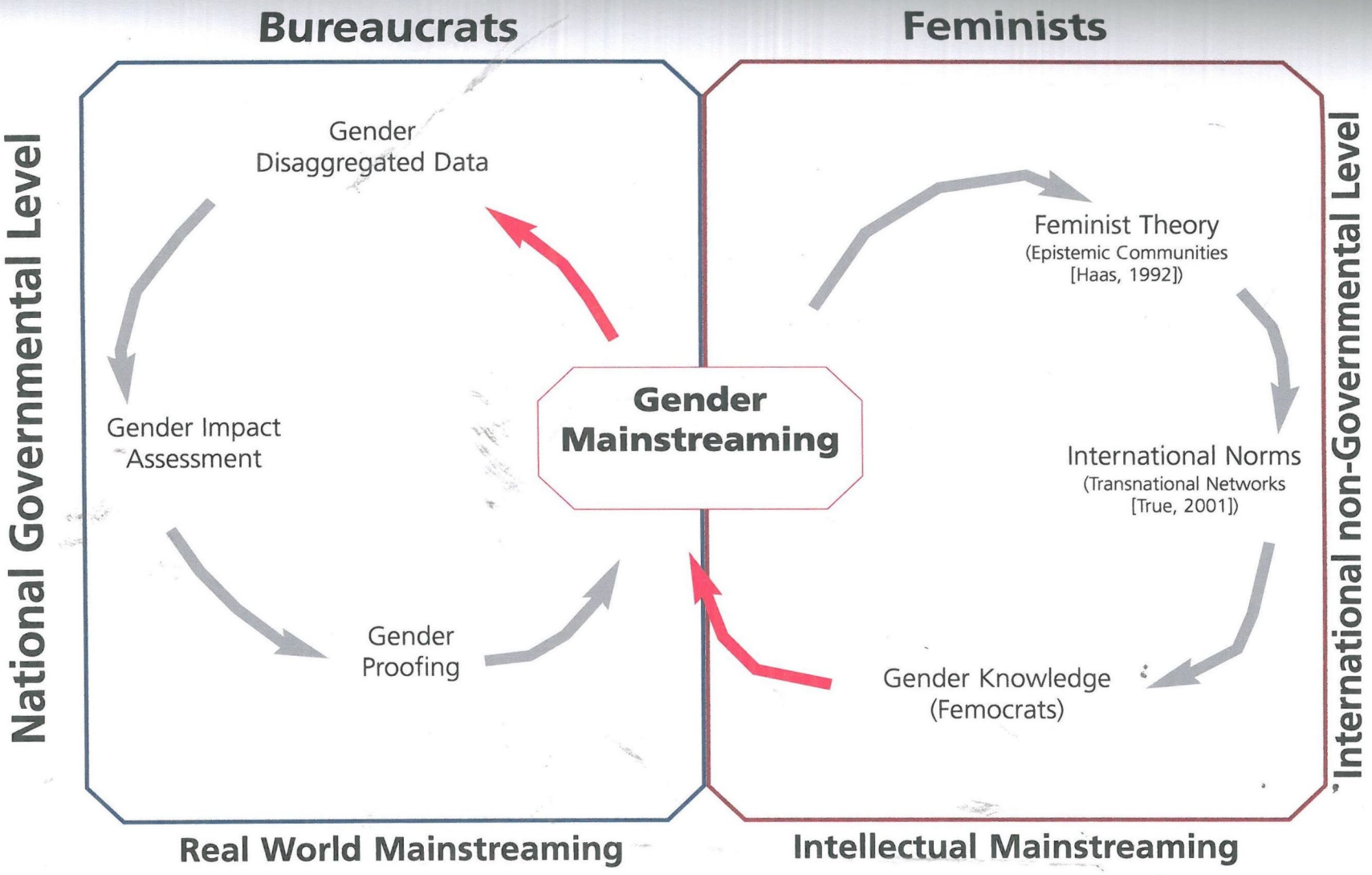
[187] The post-colonial legacy is a number of histories influencing the current official gender agenda in the Republic of Ireland (Kiberd in Murray, 1997). For instance, a functioning co-habitation of liberalism with a history of patriarchy allows culturally ascribed roles to inhibit the equalising effects of equality legislation.

the deep-seated ideological (as opposed to policy-making) reasons as to why gender mainstreaming seems to have limited effect. If Irish citizens outside the labour market were not counted in general socio-economic data, then it is likely that policies have been developed without their needs in mind. Therefore, in a sense, the very absence of data should be enough to justify the need for the development of gender-equal policies. Moreover, the inhibiting influence of a liberal framework for equality on policy provides a strong case for assessing a more vigorous and profound model of mainstreaming, something that comes nearer to accessing its potential as a whistle-blower of the inevitably limited nature of equality policy operating within a neo-liberal economic framework. This argument is further developed in an examination of the development of gender mainstreaming conceptually, and as a policy, from baseline gender disaggregated data.

6.2.1 Using Data to Mainstream Gender

Regardless of the problems surrounding the quality of statistical information available to those developing and implementing gender mainstreaming, how that information about gender is translated into gender mainstreaming proper is perhaps the most significant question posed by this research. Statistics are used to produce mechanisms for proofing, which ultimately change mainstream policies in favour of more gender equal outcomes.

Diagram 1: Data/Knowledge Flow and Gender Mainstreaming



In this diagram, the various processes, actors and institutions integral to mainstreaming gender, are identified. Gathering gender-disaggregated data allows policy-makers and femocrats to know how and where men and women partake of various programmes offered by the NDP (Author Interview, R1, February 2002, Q31: 14). Gender impact assessment requires policy-makers to fill in forms containing questions relating to how men and women participate or benefit differentially in each particular programme (Author Interview, R1, Feb 2002: 4). Gender proofing is a general term for the process of impact assessment across a range of policies. These three steps, according to policy-makers, amount to gender mainstreaming. In this diagram, the process of gender mainstreaming is informed by international gender norms: disseminated by international organisations and transnational networks (True, 2003: 373). Gender knowledge, originating from feminist thought (theory/ideology) is founded on principles of female liberation, gender equality and justice. The extent to which these ideas inform the development of gender mainstreaming determines the transformative capacity of resulting policy tools.

The gender equality expert provides a description of the process of moving from data gathering to policy development:

> 'I think its kind of like a big funnel, you know? You start off with data and then it narrows to get down to analysis and narrows again with what you can do and what you will do' (Author Interview, R1, February 2002: 7).

Conceiving of the mainstreaming process as moving from general information to specified techniques, and ultimately to fundamentally different mainstream policies, is illustrated in the information diagrams overleaf and below.

Diagram I offers a visual rendition of the data and knowledge flows that are undertaken by feminists and bureaucrats in the creation of gender mainstreaming. The left-hand side of the diagram represents the story of gender mainstreaming as interpreted by policy-makers. Policy-makers see gender mainstreaming as beginning with the gathering of gender disaggregated data. This data is then used by policy-makers to undertake gender impact assessment of all other policies,[188] to arrive at a general scheme called gender-proofing. These activities should lead to a process of gender mainstreaming where policies are changed in accordance with the requirements, absences and gender impacts itemised through the data-gathering stages. It is not surprising that policy-makers put such emphasis on the gathering of gender disaggregated data given that it is the foundation stone of what they recognise as the main steps in gender mainstreaming. However, when

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[188] For example, a gender impact assessment of transport policy may reveal that increased investment in road building over the provision of public transport may be disadvantageous to men because they are three times more likely to be killed in road traffic accidents than women (Road Accident Facts, 1997, Dublin: National Roads Authority, 1998 at http://www.irlgov.ie/justice/equality/gender/NDP/Gender1.htm).

viewed as a 'practical-theoretical' (True, 2003; 385) endeavour, intellectual gender mainstreaming is incorporated. The right-hand side of the diagram demonstrates the role of feminists as an epistemic community in the development of gender mainstreaming. From this perspective gender mainstreaming is influenced by ideas emanating from global feminism in the form of international gender norms, which are the standards for equality promoted at the conceptual level by international organisations and transnational networks (True, 2003: 373). Feminist theories about female engagement with political institutions and normative arguments revealing women's oppression, subordination or inequality (Phillips, 1987: 1), comprise the foundation on which gender mainstreaming is constructed; gender norms are proliferated, and the epistemic community of feminists exists to pioneer gender mainstreaming. Feminist thought on female emancipation amounts to gender knowledge, held by gender experts (Galligan, Barry, Duggan, McGauran),[189] whose knowledge is needed to develop the policy of gender mainstreaming. Gender knowledge informs policy-makers as to the method by which gender disaggregated data should be gathered, and what its substantive content should amount to. The links between gender knowledge, gender mainstreaming and gender disaggregated data are coloured red, because this knowledge/data flow is recognised as the most significant step in the process of gender mainstreaming, particularly as regards its potential as a transformative policy tool in the Irish case. The knowledge and assumptions underlying the adoption of gender mainstreaming determine the type, quantity, quality of data as well as the ideological orientation on which gender disaggregated data is gathered.

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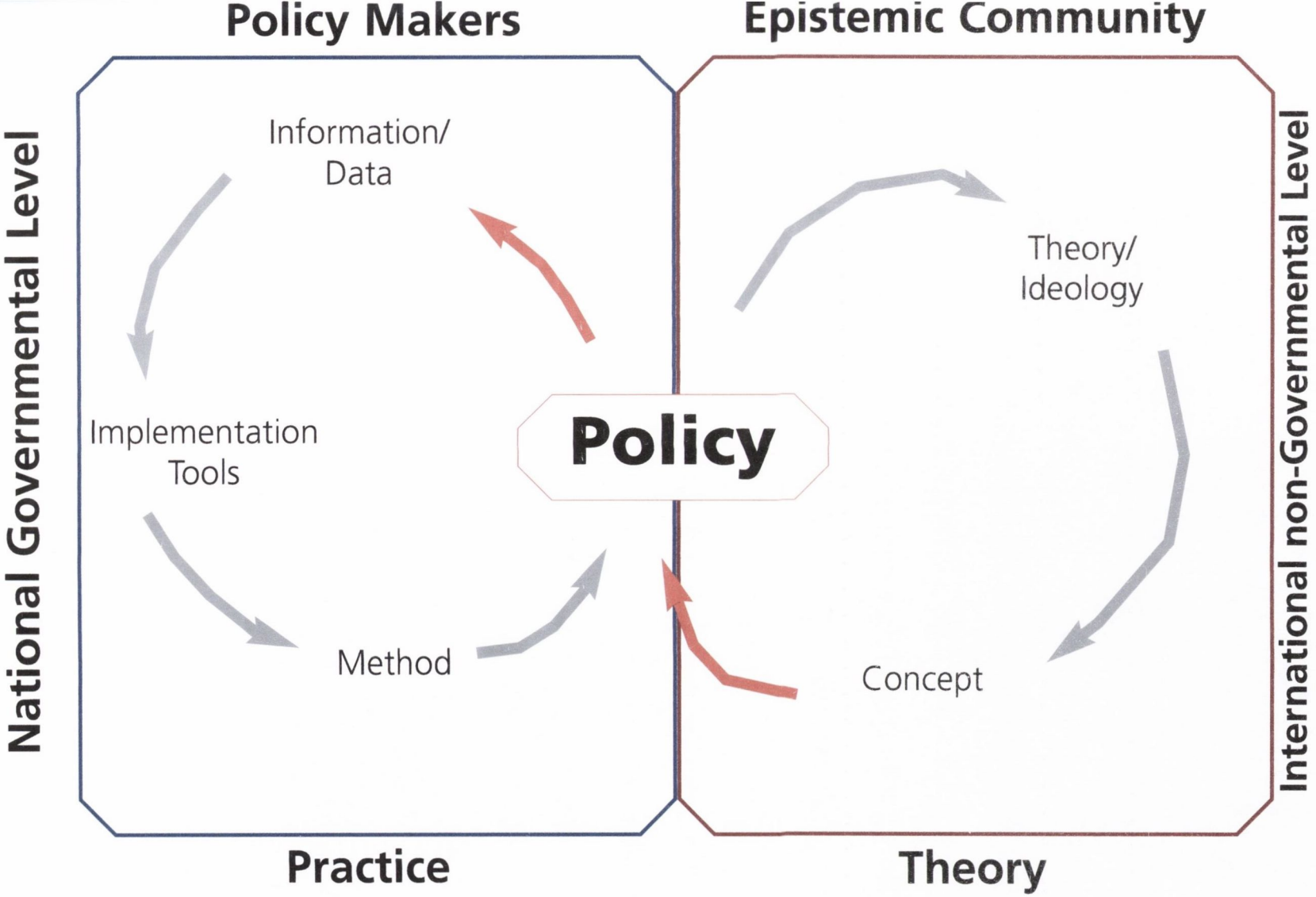
[189] Gallligan (2000) constructed performance indicators. Barry, (2000) published a report on the role of data in building an equality infrastructure. Duggan (2004) conducted research on the possibility of merging gender mainstreaming with positive action measures. McGauran (forthcoming) researched the role of bureaucracy in producing gender mainstreaming.

The diagram illustrates Mazey's (2000; 333) contention that 'intellectual and real world mainstreaming are interrelated rather than parallel developments,' by offering a clear demonstration of how feminist theory, gender knowledge and gender policy tools are mutually constitutive. Research into gender mainstreaming, gender issues and feminism provides a broader vocabulary, knowledge base and intellectual forum on which arguments for policies like gender mainstreaming, as well as imaginative means of re-orienting existing policies in terms of more equal, emancipatory and politically challenging alternatives are developed. In a sense then, the diagram demonstrates how ideas developed within feminism can become part of mainstream policy-making via gender mainstreaming. The diagram also reveals that the expert knowledge of feminist epistemic communities performs a vital function at even the most basic data-gathering level of the policy-making process. So, to separate diagram 1 into two discrete flows – one of data and practice (left-hand side), another of norms and gender knowledge (right-hand side)– weakens the potential of gender mainstreaming to have a radical impact on policy. Together they represent more than the sum of their parts. Gender knowledge informs the mainstreaming project at each and every stage of the process from providing guidelines on how data should be gathered, what amounts to a gender impact assessment, and what to look for in policies when gender proofing. Knowledge of gender issues, emanating from feminism, is a dynamic crucial to the mainstreaming process. This diagrammatic rendition of how the 'theory/practice gap' (True, 2003; 383) is manifest demonstrates not only the steps through which policy-makers work in order to produce gender mainstreaming, but also the fact that each step is inter-related. Ideological orientations inform how international norms become national policy through data gathering, gender training, and



This diagram demonstrates how policies relate to larger political priorities and ideological imperatives. All policies are based on evidence (data) demonstrating a need for public services (e.g. death tolls from smoking related illnesses was used to justify the introduction of a smoking in the workplace ban this year). Certain tools are developed as a method for implementing the policy, and eventually a policy is developed. The impetus for the policy comes from normative theories that identify necessary public goods and services.

international conference attendance.[190] Depending on whether one views the process from the perspective of the bureaucrat or the feminist, the process begins with either: 1) the gathering of gender-disaggregated data, or, 2) communication between knowledge based experts (epistemic community members) through international organisations, non-governmental organisations and transnational networks (True, 2001). The role of knowledge (emanating from epistemic communities) in policy-making is clarified by the more general example outlined in Diagram II.

The second diagram demonstrates how policies in a more general sense relate to larger political priorities and ideological imperatives. Policies are based on evidence that there is a need to provide services (e.g. clean water or good roads). Certain tools are developed as a method for implementing the policy, and eventually a policy is developed. The impetus for the policy project, from genesis to implementation, is influenced by normative theories of what are desirable public goods and services. For instance, patriarchal norms justify investments in building military power as vital for national security (Campbell, 2004: 11). Meanwhile, feminist lobby-groups identify a link between male power and escalating violence against women (UN quoted in O'Connor and Wilson, 2002: 10) In short, the underlying assumptions and values of a particular regime have enormous influence in determining what makes 'good' or desirable policy. This complex relationship between ideology and policy is clearly illustrated by a third diagram illustrating the role of liberal values in the development of equality policy in the Republic of Ireland. The policy is

[190] International conferences of gender mainstreaming experts are regularly held to exchange best practice and policy-making experiences. These conferences are generally sponsored by supra-national or international organisations.

informed by underlying concepts in a number of ways, not least in terms of gathering data to determine where investments should be made.

The third diagram demonstrates how liberal values of free market growth and economic prosperity permeate every aspect of policy-making in the Republic (FitzGerald, et. al., 2003: 221). As such, liberal ideals over-shadow policy-making, society and political culture, informing and influencing equality initiatives. While the liberalisation and modernisation of Irish political culture were largely responsible for increasing female access to 'opportunities' such as paid employment (Galligan, 1998; 32) these values are also responsible for the ultimately unequal outcomes resulting from equality legislation, positive action measures and other equality initiatives instigated by national and international institutions since the 1970s.

The Second Commission on the Status of Women (1993), a national initiative to give women a voice, produced 211 recommendations on everything from abortion to rural transport (see Chapter 5). It is a good example of the pre-mainstreaming gender paradigm as women were forced to articulate all gender issues in Irish society at once and in one document. Likewise, legislation on equal pay was ultimately limited. It failed to significantly narrow the gender pay gap because legislation was dependent on women demonstrating that they could comply to the established (male) norm for work done in that area (Mahon and Morgan in Galligan, Ward and Wilford, 1999: 68). Positive action measures were devised to supplement equality legislation, particularly beyond the labour market. The overall basis for Irish equality was to provide equality of opportunity so that 'women citizens' could be added to established social structures and political institutions.

Findings from this research suggest that problems now experienced by gender mainstreaming are rooted in the powerful inhibiting influence of over-arching neo-liberal economic priorities, which limit the conception, interpretation, and implementation of gender mainstreaming to the level of equality of opportunity. Gender mainstreaming is more concerned with measuring outputs from policy spending than changing the masculinist basis for policy-making.

> 'Gender is such a small part of the whole thing. Expenditure is the most important part – we have to make sure that they are spending the money. So all the measurements are based on what is spent. There's not much you can say on gender equality' (Author Interview, R20, August 2002; 3).

A change of ideological leaning will always significantly change policy, while a large amount of evidence (data) as to current activities of government will rarely be influential in its own right. One policy-maker notes the need for 'political will' if technical measures like gender mainstreaming are to work:

> 'The Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion co-coordinating committee turns the spotlight on gender... meet one day every 6 months. In practice the Gender Equality Unit uses it to provide information and practical initiatives, and departments with the will to change use them. Where departments just don't have that political will then nothing happens, and the co-coordinating committee has no penalties power, other than criticism from the Chair - at the co-coordinating and monitoring committee level – five minutes of embarrassment. That's a weakness

of how gender mainstreaming is applied in Ireland' (Author Interview, R14, July, 2003; 2).

In this way, the diagrams demonstrate the implication of changing ideas and values in order to mainstream gender. In the Irish case the development of gender mainstreaming as a transformative policy tool is hampered by existing processes in Irish politics and policy-making system (diagram III).

When conceptualising gender mainstreaming, it is easy for feminist thinkers to idealise the process and visualise it as pictured in diagram I: as an issue of communication that requires education and training of policy-makers.[191] This research suggests that in the Irish case, gender mainstreaming must adapt to fit with political processes. Some of these processes, such as the emphasis on a liberal market ideology[192] render any version of equality beyond equality of opportunity impossible as more radical conceptions of equality contravene the basic assumptions of liberalism that provide the foundation stone for Irish politics and policy-making. Conclusions to be drawn from this lesson are significant. Firstly, the conceptualisation of the mainstreaming process developed in this research reveals how the integration of a programme like gender mainstreaming could challenge established structures were profound ideological changes possible. Secondly, the diagrams reveal that policy-making is a dynamic rather than static process, into which

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[191] Indeed, this was an initial conclusion drawn from this research. See Carney (2003) *op. cit.*

[192] 'The central challenge which is addressed in this National Development Plan is the implementation of public policies which will increase the capacity of Ireland's economy to maintain strong and sustainable output and employment growth. It must prepare the economy for the competitive challenges arising from new and rapidly changing domestic and international economic conditions' (NDP, 2000; 8).

it is extremely difficult to find a moment of entry for new or alternative ideas.[193] In terms of learning from the Irish case, the diagrams also illustrate that the information provided by femocrats to mainstream policy-makers is

> 'neither guesses nor "raw" data; it is the product of human interpretations of social... phenomena' (Haas, 1992; 4).

This is important if we are to realise that the moment of entry for feminist ideas may be in the practice of gathering gender disaggregated data.

6.2.2 'Raw Data' versus the product of human interpretations[194]

As already described, diagram I appears to represent a challenging number of inter-reliant activities on the road to developing gender mainstreaming. Clearly, the fundamental purpose of each process is to re-construct data and policy so that gender becomes a significant element of government policy-making, in line with international standards. In this way, diagram I illustrates how each stage in the gender mainstreaming process is influenced by both theoretical and practical issues. For instance, for feminists the absence of data on women raises questions (see section 4.2.3). Meanwhile, the indeterminate meaning of gender mainstreaming places doubt in the minds of mainstream policy-

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[193] 'Mason argued that these formal mechanisms were largely window dressing. In her view, governments were "fairly impenetrable"' (Eisenstein, 1996; 95).

[194] Haas (1992) *op. cit.*, p. 4.

makers. Conflicting interpretations of the process of mainstreaming reveal how the bifurcation of gender mainstreaming, (from a holistic feminist critique of policy into a dichotomy of feminism vs. mainstream), occurs when international norms impact at the national level. Policy-makers wish gender mainstreaming to be a process of re-evaluation based on hard evidence and data; femocrats know that gender mainstreaming requires a level of lateral thinking which allows the incorporation of previously 'irrelevant' issues, the maximal interpretation of ill-defined concepts and the re-evaluation of policy in terms of its impact on people rather than national budgets.

> 'I think the focus on things means that people aren't looked at all. So it's really really hard to insert any kind of proofing into a policy that doesn't look at how people are going to be affected by it as a starting point (Author Interview, R1, February 2002: 9).

The theoretical roots of diagram I (feminist theory) suggest that gender equality is a fundamental principle and priority of this particular policy-making system, while in Diagrams II and III this is not necessarily the case. In reality, the information gathered in gender impact assessment forms rarely becomes policy. Policy-makers stall at the data-gathering stage because they do not fully comprehend how the other aspects of the diagram, (particularly concepts such as gender) could be relevant. The key to transforming data into new policy is in understanding how feminist theory relates to gender mainstreaming. Clearly, at a broad political level, feminist theory provides normative theoretical arguments on which the *raison d'etre* of gender mainstreaming rests. Gender mainstreaming represents the internally positioned critique, which can expand the margins 'without, however, significantly affecting the centre (Peterson, 1992: 184). In practical

terms, gender mainstreaming stagnates because the kind of information currently gathered does not provide evidence that promotes political and policy commitment to it. This situation produces confusion, and policy-makers express frustration with the whole process:

> 'Well there is always the possibility that there is gender prejudice, but I suppose you never know. I think there is a problem though – that it is a very complicated idea and its not very clear' (Author Interview, R20, August 2002; 5).

In theoretical terms, the experience of mainstream policy-makers' conceptions of gender mainstreaming echoes Peterson's (1992) assertion that:

> 'As long as marginal terrain is seen as incoherent, irrelevant or threatening, it is easier to remain – if that is where you begin – at the centre' (Peterson, 1992; 187).[195]

Ideological boundaries limit policy-makers and femocrats to asking un-ambitious questions in the process of data-gathering. They attempt to quantify female participation across programmes. Such an approach fails to reveal that women are more likely to be in situations, which are not readily measured according to existing priorities; such as the informal economy, the private sphere, or involved in unpaid work or supportive, family-centred roles.[196] The concepts and categories employed in the current Irish policy-making model do not allow policy-makers to deal with the possibility that men and women have

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[195] The issue of communicating as a subordinated group in relation to gender mainstreaming is elaborated in Carney, G. (2003) 'Communicating or Just Talking? Gender Mainstreaming and the Communication of Global Feminism' *Women and Language* Special Issue. Global Issues in Feminism: Challenges, Opportunities, Insights.Vol.XXVI. No. 1., 52-60.

[196] 'For Draper, the kinds of things that she sought to accomplish lent themselves very poorly to this kind of quantified measure of performance' (Eisenstein, 1996; 191).

different ascribed gender identities, which cause them to interact differently and/or unequally with political institutions.

> 'Everything is done on an economic basis and if you have that approach, social policy is always an add-on. Everything is decided on the basis of how much it costs. It's difficult to offer the same obvious measurement of social issues. People need to have the technical capacity to deal with these kind of things, you need to give them that if you want them to change how they work' (Author Interview, R19, August 2002; 3).

The result is that the mainstreaming process does not move beyond 'box-ticking.' To date, gender mainstreaming can achieve little more than to demonstrate where men and women interact differentially with institutions.

> 'Another problem with gender mainstreaming is that it could be a distraction from more equality towards becoming a mechanism you could play with. If a Minister came into my office now and said I need to be seen to be doing something about gender equality but I don't actually want to change anything I might suggest doing something like gender mainstreaming' (Author Interview; R3, July, 2002; 6-7).

As argued in Chapter 5, equality in the Republic of Ireland is conceptualised around the idea of an abstract individual freely interacting with the liberal democratic state. The information gathered to show evidence of inequality tends to reveal that women are performing rather poorly under a system of equal opportunity (http://www.cso.ie). This kind of evidence is found in the Second Commission on the Status of Women; the evidence of the gender pay gap (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton, 2002: 149) and female participation rates in political institutions (see Chapter 5). However, liberal democratic

values that foster freedom on the basis of undifferentiated equal status will never account for mitigating factors such as caring responsibilities, supportive family roles and social institutions such as marriage, culture and religious beliefs which together produce a political culture where some citizens are freer to participate in public life than others. On a general level, if it were to produce equality of outcome, gender mainstreaming would have to over-ride these mainstream political cultural values.

> 'It requires no less than a radical redefinition of policy values' (Woodward, 2003: 65).

In essence then, the mainstreaming process is stumbling at what appears to be the first level in policy development; data gathering. Marooned within a neo-liberal economic policy plan (NDP), gender mainstreaming is limited to the over-arching aims of the plan, which clearly reflect the neo-liberal economic values of the government. For instance,

> 'mainstreaming equal opportunities between women and men' is a programme objective of only one of the five Operational Programmes of the NDP (FitzGerald, 2003: 221).[197]

The Economic and Social Infrastructure Operational Programme

> 'highlights the programme's impact on gender equality in public transport, health and housing' (FitzGerald, 2003: 221).

Likewise, the Regional Operational Programmes do not consider gender other than

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[197] Gender mainstreaming, is implemented solely through the Employment and Human Resources Operational Programme of the National Development Plan.

> 'to promote equality and facilitate greater participation of women in the workplace and business' via the social inclusion/childcare Priority (FitzGerald, 2003: 221).

It is not surprising, therefore, that policy-makers involved in gender impact assessment would assume that gender is irrelevant to their work given that gender equality is not an explicit aim of the National Development Plan, as outlined by the Minister for Finance:

> 'The vision of the National Development Plan is to ensure that Ireland will remain competitive in the global international marketplace and that the fruits of our economic success will be shared more equally at regional level and throughout society' (McCreevy, Foreward, NDP 2000-2006).

Data, identified as central to the mainstreaming process (on the basis that it is needed to show that gender mainstreaming is necessary), reflects the extent to which international gender norms are re-interpreted to fit domestic political structures. In the Irish case, domestic interpretations are at a minimal level.

> 'The NDP is all about money, the last instalment of money from Europe... I understand from my own experience at the Department of Finance that they would just have wanted to gender mainstream according to the regulations from the EU. So that would mean that only the measures financed by the structural funds, that would only be 7% of the whole NDP budget would be mainstreamed. But somehow, this department (Justice, Equality and Law Reform), by whatever means, managed to get the whole NDP mainstreamed' (Author Interview, R5, July 2002: 2).

So, even though the introduction of gender mainstreaming in the first instance may have been a *coup* for gender equality policy-makers, the absence of gender disaggregated data means that, according to established standards of what justifies investment in a policy, femocrats cannot show that gender mainstreaming is a good use of time and resources (Author Interview, R1, February 2002).[198]

> 'In our department we luckily have a talented new statistician who understands these things. At the moment a scooping exercise is being done to get more from the data we have. We have lots of information that is just not published. When he has put it all together we'll publish it and invite experts to identify gaps' (Author Interview, R4, July 2004; 3).

The result of such faith in data to reveal a way forward is a flurry of activity to produce data, just to maintain the policy. Policy-makers engage in a kind of life support data collection strategy where more time and effort is spent demonstrating that women are under-represented or excluded from programmes, than devising policies that would either reverse current trends or produce imaginative measures of what constitutes equality on the basis of differential social and political identities and roles.

> 'Well to be honest what strikes me about areas like equality is that you get lots of people talking to each other about things like gender mainstreaming. But how does talking about things like gender mainstreaming affect the ordinary everyday woman maybe dropping children at school or doing some shopping in a suburb of

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[198] '...decision makers will seek advice to gain information which will justify or legitimate a policy that they wish to pursue for political ends' (Haas, 1992; 15).

Dublin today? Who is thinking about the impact of this thing on her?' (Author Interview, R5, July 2002: 3).

Policy-makers are imbued with a sense that gender-proofing is somehow important for women, though no clear link between the gender impact assessment forms and new opportunities or outcomes for women is made. The result is that it becomes a self-referential exercise in proofing. Time and resources are put into gathering data, developing indicators and proofing measures, rather than in re-conceptualising existing gendered power relations. Haas (1992; 15) identifies this problem as common in situations where the necessary knowledge base does not penetrate established institutions effectively:

> 'While they may desire probability statistics and similar data for purposes of "determining" the gravity of a situation, they may also use the information for other purposes, such as justifying a "wait and watch" policy and deferring responsibility until the future, when other actors may be held responsible' (Haas, 1992; 15).

Interestingly, the gender equality expert sees gender mainstreaming as an alternative to established 'liberal' strategies such as equal opportunities policy. She argues that its horizontal insertion into established structures, together with its position as an internal critique of the gendered implications of the liberal democratic state, represent the radical element of gender mainstreaming:

> 'I think its the liberal/radical difference that the legislation and the positive action is all liberal equal opportunities. You know, everybody must be able to equally access things, and gender mainstreaming as far as I'm concerned is the radical

approach. It's looking at the outcomes for different groups - breaking stereotypes' (Author Interview, R1, February 2002: 14).

Could data be the issue by which the transformative potential of gender mainstreaming is lost, at least in the Irish case? If the data gathered was based on feminist standards of what constitutes equality rather than established (liberal) standards, and the data was used to build policy rather than count costs, could gender mainstreaming be transformatory? The question posed in the remainder of this research is whether gender mainstreaming presents the opportunity for a radical re-structuring of policy-making identified by the Irish gender equality expert, or, whether it will stall at the level of equal opportunities as the findings from this research suggest. Central to addressing this question is the consideration of how feminist epistemic communities penetrate mainstream bureaucracy, primarily through sharing their gender expertise. As such, identifying gender knowledge as a key step in the development of gender mainstreaming policy is important in charting the future for gender mainstreaming, and providing a complete framework for interpreting the current process and its outcomes.

6.3 Gender Knowledge[199]

A review of the development of 'gender mainstreaming' (Chapter 2) leads one to conclude (as noted before) that knowledge of gender is mainly situated within the feminist community (True, 2001). Gender mainstreaming offers a route by which this gender

[199] A clear articulation of what is implied by 'gender knowledge' is on page 22.

knowledge can be transmitted into the policy process, re-shaping gender relations and gender policy outcomes. The aim of gender mainstreaming is, firstly, to reveal the gender impact of policies. This practice surely has repercussions for the construction of knowledge and the implicit assumptions on which it is based? Central to understanding the complete picture of the process of gender mainstreaming, that is; the inter-relatedness of theory (feminism) and practice (bureaucracy) in the policy-making process, is identifying how gender knowledge is constituted in feminism, and communicated to policy-makers. The remainder of this Chapter outlines and explicitly identifies the development of gender knowledge as a key step in the development of gender mainstreaming as a transformative policy tool. The Chapter concludes that absence of gender knowledge in the development of gender mainstreaming in the Irish case has resulted in the policy retaining marginal rather than mainstream status. Perhaps the most important link between intellectual and real world mainstreaming (identified in diagram I) is the origins of international norms and gender knowledge in global feminism. The political and philosophical roots of gender mainstreaming can be found in feminist theory.[200] Most importantly in terms of this thesis, obstacles to developing a coherent policy and concept of gender mainstreaming can be linked to its origins within global feminism. The following section investigates the role of feminism in generating gender knowledge and ultimately gender mainstreaming policy. As such, section 6.3 links the empirical and theoretical aspects of the thesis and completes the circle as regards producing an interpretative framework for the thesis, identified in early Chapters as one of the primary contributions of this research. This is achieved by examining how the feminist

[200] 'The theoretical roots of gender mainstreaming go back to gender analysis and feminist theory' (Woodward, 2001; 137).

contention that patriarchy dictates the policy agenda[201] are translated into policy tools through developing a dialogue between mainstream bureaucrats and feminist policy-makers. The Chapter concludes by asking whether the limits imposed by prevailing ideology has created obstacles to change which merely re-locate female subordination within mainstream bureaucracies.

6.3.1 Knowledge and feminism: many feminists, one voice?

As argued in Chapters 2 and 3, it is naïve to assume that there exists a global, unified body of feminist thought and activity. In fact, such an assumption is at the heart of many of the problems now facing 'global' gender policies like 'gender mainstreaming.' While feminist groups and activity may exist globally this does not mean that there is a single unified feminist goal, identity or political movement (hooks, 2000; *x*).

The debate amongst feminists is summarised as follows:

> 'There is no single international women's movement, nor such as thing as global feminism...However, there is no doubt that from the plurality of women's movements it makes sense to talk of 'women's movements' as national and international actors articulating new political and economic agendas based upon critiques of inequities in gender power relations' (O'Brien, Goetz, Scholte and Williams, 2000; 32)

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[201]One way in which such patriarchy is manifest is the fact that women's bureaux and Gender Equality Units are generally seen as dispensable. 'Most of the time I was in the Women's Bureaux which was eighteen months and seemed like eighteen years, was spent simply justifying existing...' (Davies in Eisenstein, 1996; 172).

There are a number of different categories of feminist thought and political activity beyond the accepted liberal, radical, socialist divisions. Even within these recognised divisions, disagreements often outweigh agreement. In short, when viewed from a global perspective, 21st century feminism looks less certain, less united and less co-ordinated than second-wave feminism, deftly described by Mazey (2000; 334)

> '...second-wave feminists, who, since the 1970s, have sought to secure gains for women through engagement with the liberal democratic state and participation in 'mainstream' politics' (Mazey, 2000; 334).

Post-colonial feminists have criticised second-wave feminism as an essentially western-led programme seeking equality exclusively for white women (Spivak, 1987). Post-modern feminists criticise liberal feminists for failing to offer a credible alternative to mainstream values, institutions, epistemologies and ideologies (Browning Cole, 1993; 24). Second wave feminism(s) are derided as a general category by a younger generation of women, identified as post-feminist, who claim that since women now have equal rights and equality of opportunity, feminist campaigning, activism and thought are now obsolete. So, what is widely described as 'Feminism,' implying a unified interest group with clearly defined goals is in fact a misnomer. In truth, there are as many feminism(s) as there are political cultures, ideologies and political theories. All different, often contradictory, yet struggling to articulate political ideals and aims within highly constrictive and over-general categories of 'feminism' and 'women.' The multiple divisions and categorisations ascribed to different groups operating under the umbrella 'feminism' become apparent

when a single, official policy is internationally accepted as the modus operandi for the pursuit of what can loosely be described as feminist goals. From its first articulation at the UN World Conference on Women in Nairobi (1985), gender mainstreaming has reflected a high level of vagueness. This thesis has argued that this lack of clarity, while a serious problem for gender mainstreaming, is reflective of the multiple feminism(s) that designed it at the World Conferences on Women since 1975 (Chapter 3). UN sponsorship of development programmes and feminist initiatives have strengthened the international women's movement (Ward, 1999; 216). It is recognised in the literature that international organisations were vital to the development of 'international feminism' or what True and Mintrom (2001; 38) refer to as 'women's transnational activism.' Verloo (2001) identifies UN facilitation of the feminist groups through World Conferences as one of the key reasons why political support for 'gender mainstreaming' has grown (Verloo, 2001; 6). Apart from providing women with the opportunity to associate in an amenable environment,[202] UN conferences also provided a level of political legitimacy that gave women the motivation and support to take on the huge task of trying to convert their national government to a more egalitarian political position (Steinstra, 1994; xiii, True and Mintrom, 2001; 38; Ward, 1999; 225). The significance of the UN, specifically as sponsor of numerous World Conferences on Women between 1975 and 1985, to the proliferation of mainstreaming norms was elaborated in Chapter 2. One of the challenges that adopting a unified approach via large international organisations is that feminism too is forced to operate as one, large movement. In essence, a single policy like gender mainstreaming requires a unified knowledge base within feminism, something that does not exist in any

[202] Pietila and Vickers (1994) describe the Third World Conference of Women in Nairobi in 1985 as 'a gathering of women from all over the world without equal in the past... there was a constant flow of improvised gatherings, discussions, group meetings of all kinds and in all places...' (Pietila and Vickers, 1994; 3).

coherent sense. The thesis concludes that this is one of the main inhibitors of the development of gender mainstreaming in theory and practice.[203] The mainstream perspective is that feminism represents a single political objective, or body of work. This perspective ignores the complexities and internal disagreements that can co-exist with agreement amongst groups at the epistemic level. However, Haas (1992; 18) recognises the potential of internal debate in refining the ideas of an epistemic community:

> 'epistemic community members may still engage in internal and often intense debates leading to a refinement of their ideas and the generation of a new consensus on the knowledge base.'

This is the challenge that current debate within feminism, and dialogue with bureaucrats currently holds for gender mainstreaming.

6.3.2 Dialogue/Monologue: the articulation of feminism in mainstream bureaucracy

To many, the development of gender mainstreaming as a term to describe the process of change currently underway within over 100 policy-making machineries (True & Mintrom, 2001) across the globe, is at best confusing and at worst deficient and misleading (Woodward, 2001; 6). Confusion as to the meaning is rooted in the fact that concepts and ideas, and language and vocabulary to communicate these ideas do not exist beyond

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[203] In the final analysis, gender mainstreaming falls prey to a number of inhibiting factors, not least its susceptibility to appropriation by the neo-liberal ideological leaning in Irish policy-making. While this fact raises the question as to whether better definition would make the implementation of gender mainstreaming any easier, it still stands that gender mainstreaming would have a better chance of survival were it less easy to claim that it is ill-defined and needs clearer conceptual elaboration.

feminism (DeFrancisco, 1997; 38). As demonstrated in Chapter 3, often the only vocabulary available to deal with gender mainstreaming exists at the level of political debate within feminism. The question for those examining the translation of global feminism into mainstream policy-making (via gender mainstreaming) is whether it can be articulated in mainstream theory and practice. This thesis concludes that while gender mainstreaming may exist within the language of global feminism,[204] the concepts central to the movement have not been internalised by bureaucrats. The result is that gender mainstreaming emerges as a feminist/bureaucratic monologue, rather than as a dialogue between feminism and mainstream policy-making. Language developed around gender mainstreaming is meaningless to policy-makers without either gender knowledge or a feminist perspective. Few policy-makers are trained in the area of gender, and fewer still are encouraged to adopt political standpoints. The result is a situation where policy-makers and feminists are talking past one another. Both are engaged in a curious monologue in which there is no actual communication exchange. For instance, feminists are unwilling to accept that policy-makers may have difficulty understanding some of the core concepts of the 'mainstreaming' project, using this as an excuse to avoid gender mainstreaming.

> 'I don't think policy-makers are as muddled as they say. The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment have high levels of knowledge, but they know it involves extra work but there are no extra resources. It's not worth their while to

[204] As evidenced in True and Mintrom's (2001; 27) claim that 'transnational networks composed largely of nonstate actors (notably women's international nongovernmental organisations and the United Nations) have been the primary forces driving the diffusion of gender mainstreaming.'

do it. What matters is what your authorities validate and what you get kudos for' (Author Interview; R14, July, 2002).

The thoughts of this feminist policy-maker can be linked to the issues regarding the influence of political ideology discussed earlier in this Chapter. Authorities will reward activities that promote and expand government policy. In the final analysis, there is no motivation for policy-makers to understand gender mainstreaming, because the central aims of the project are essentially at odds with the broader political goals of the National Development Plan.

In the Irish case, a number of key steps between theory and action are being omitted. The key step missing is that of communication and translation. I argue that these core communication problems relate to the ideological divide between feminism and mainstream theory and action. Developed within feminism, at the margins of political thought and action, gender mainstreaming is essentially a political ideal to be integrated into policy. Such is the tradition of feminist culture to inhabit the margins in order to retain its independence of the (mainstream) oppressor, that gender mainstreaming developed not in cooperation with, but in opposition to, current activities in policy-making. Does gender mainstreaming offer an opportunity to move gender 'from the margins to the mainstream' (Galligan, 1998) or does it simply signify that we are mainstreaming marginality?

6.4. Conclusion: Mainstreaming Marginality?

The outcome in the Irish case is that problems of articulation ultimately lead to the development of a muted form of gender mainstreaming. The bureaucratic Goliath transforms gender mainstreaming from a potentially radical policy that is difficult to explain, into an impotent initiative within a neo-liberal economic plan. Perhaps the most interesting and challenging finding of this research is the demonstration of how the requirements of the rational-bureaucratic model, (the use of data to support policy investment) ultimately leads to the gender mainstreaming project being reduced to little more than a tangential proofing requirement in the National Development Plan. To summarise, difficulties in communicating gender mainstreaming, and its retarded development as an emancipatory policy suggest that the policy may be encountering more profound problems related to the value-structure on which it is based. Essentially, the seeds of initiative that were introduced via the internationally popular policy of gender mainstreaming fell on stony soil in the National Development Plan of the Irish government. The National Development Plan is clearly the product of a conservative electoral agenda, of which labour market policy and economic prosperity are the cornerstones. Frustrations with the lack of focus on welfare[205] and the human impact of policy is expressed by one policy-maker as a major problem for gender mainstreaming:

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[205] Eisenstein (1996) also argued that a focus on welfare under the Australian social compact sustained the bureaucratic commitment to women's interests. When this compact was replaced by a neo-liberal ideology, femocrats' arguments became meaningless and unsatisfactory.

> 'The culture of policy-making, well particularly in Ireland, its all about getting money for your department and then using that money to buy things like buses and roads and houses with no analysis of who's going to use the stuff. Its very like bread-winner and homemaker stuff. The policy-makers get all this dosh[206] and they bring it back to the department, they never think about what happens then. And I also think the focus on developing things and building things means that people aren't looked at all. So its really, really hard to insert any kind of proofing into a policy that doesn't look at how people are going to be affected by it as a starting point. (Author Interview, R1, February 2002; 9).

It would seem, on reflection, that the main motivation for introducing gender mainstreaming was that its rational-bureaucratic structure made it seem compatible with established policy-making procedures (Woodward, 2001). The conceptualisation of gender mainstreaming as a proofing mechanism, and its compatibility with a logic of performance management and programme measurement, led policy-makers to believe it to be compatible with established policy, and in particular the National Development Plan. In such an environment, the most far-reaching possible achievement of gender mainstreaming would be a liberal standard of equality of opportunity in relation to each aspect of the plan.

These conclusions aside, it is arguable that the fact that gender mainstreaming was introduced at all, makes it a success (if somewhat qualified) in the Republic of Ireland.

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[206] 'Dosh' meaning money.

The mere existence of gender mainstreaming led to the establishment of the Gender Equality Unit at the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform. The unit provided a legitimate space and some resources (see Chapter 5) with which the gender equality agenda could be developed. In actuality, the focus on data, and performance measurement became a point of contention between femocrats, who believed the purpose of gender disaggregated data was to demonstrate how policies were having disproportionate impacts according to gender and bureaucrats, who assumed that the gathering of gender-disaggregated data was necessary in order to justify why the policy merited continued investment. Essentially, the issue of data became a metaphor for the problem of miscommunication between feminist and policy-making communities. This thesis concludes that this miscommunication stemmed from profound ideological divisions between feminists and bureaucrats which I identify as the fundamental paradox of gender mainstreaming – its appeal as a liberal strategy and its failure as a potentially radical internal critique. These ideological differences are manifest in confused meanings, dichotomous interpretations, lack of communication and are at the core of the problems currently facing gender mainstreaming (Carney, 2003). The paradox that befalls gender mainstreaming is common to many feminist interactions with liberal democratic institutions. The acceptability of a programme of reform is inevitably connected to its ultimate inability to radically challenge established structures. Gender mainstreaming appeared compatible with neo-liberal economic policy.

> 'A policy with such transformative potential has seldom been taken on with such alacrity' (Woodward, 1999; 137).

Gender mainstreaming was introduced because its vague articulation made it acceptable to feminists, governments and policy-makers alike. A parallel can be drawn with feminist empiricism:

> 'Sandra Harding points out that there is a beneficial kind of "conservatism" about feminist empiricism; since it is mainly a call for better philosophy, better science, and so forth, in styles already institutionally recognized as valid, it is not in principle terribly disturbing to those who already hold positions of power and influence' (Browning Cole, 1993: 85).

Similar criticisms have been leveled at gender mainstreaming:

> 'That mainstreaming seems to have been so easily accepted by the signatory countries to the Beijing action platform could be a sign that, while gender-aware policy-makers and feminists seem to be speaking the same language as power holders who have complied with their requests, what that language might mean in practice is perhaps quite different' (Woodward, 2001; 137).

The very vagueness of gender mainstreaming allowed for multiple interpretations as to what it could imply for mainstream policy reform. However, its ability to co-habit with liberal economic, political and social structures ultimately led to its re-shaping as a rather inadequate method of policy evaluation rather than as a 'radical critique of existing power relations' (Braig and Wölte, 2002; 9). In short, the motive for (and method of) gender mainstreaming's introduction is ultimately its limitation. It appears that gender mainstreaming may have been introduced for what it could not achieve, rather than its transformative potential. Likewise, its status as a gender policy within a neo-liberal

economic plan rendered it subject to the de-politicising influence of performance indicators and economic rationalism.

At present, it looks like gender mainstreaming presents more cause for concern than celebration (True, 2003: 387). However, a number of conclusions can be drawn from this research that present more optimistic challenges for feminism and policy development, on a broader level. Firstly, gender mainstreaming represents a significant political juncture for feminism. For the first time, knowledge about gender relations, hierarchies and feminist theories are deemed valuable by mainstream governments the world over. Moreover, the popularity of gender mainstreaming means that time and resources are being invested in gender policies, which provide new fora for feminist politics:

> 'Assessing the theoretical and practical implications of gender mainstreaming provides a context for activists and scholars to engage with one another' (True, 2003; 386).

This new context for multi-lateral feminist inquiry and activity provides the finest opportunity to access the 'radical potential' of gender mainstreaming at the global level. Multi-lateral and inter-disciplinary engagement between multiple feminist sites (and perspectives) provides an opportunity to gain experience in interacting with mainstream institutions in a self-critical and reflective way. This is no minor contribution if one considers the awesome contribution that scholars of gender and development (Goetz, 1997; Moser, 1993) and Australian femocracy (Eisenstein, 1996) have made to our understanding of gender mainstreaming. In this way, scholars of gender mainstreaming are building on the work of predecessors in bringing

'missing vistas to the field's[207] usual outlook' (Sylvester, 2002: 13).

In this way, gender mainstreaming has provided a number of (foreseen and unforeseen) opportunities and challenges for mainstream and feminist thought/scholarship. Some of the more profound challenges are observable in linking the outcomes of mainstreaming policies to deeper epistemological questions. For instance:

> 'Jaggar concludes that the deep conceptual link between liberalism and empiricism signals a reason for rejecting feminist empiricism' (Browning Cole, 1993. p. 86).

Does gender-proofing amount to feminist empiricism? If so, is it being rejected by some feminist commentators (Zalewski in Braig and Wolte, 2002) for these same reasons? To the extent that feminist empiricism can be described as the challenge to

> 'scientists and philosophers to Look Again! *(sic)* rather than find a wholly new way of looking' (Browning Cole, 1993: 85)

Irish interpretations of gender mainstreaming could be said to reflect feminist empiricist values. If discussions of gender-disaggregated data made earlier in the Chapter, reflect a link between empiricism and liberalism, that has inadvertently produced a fairly impotent manifestation of gender mainstreaming at least in the Irish case, then True's (2003: 387) call for feminist engagement with 'gender advocates inside mainstreaming institutions' is fully justified. This research has argued that intellectual feminism can make a contribution to the development of gender policy. This can be achieved by clarifying concepts, naming ideological foe, articulating practical problems and providing a critical and independent body of literature from which activists can draw. As such, a commitment to ethical and participatory research, integral to feminist scholarship, is vindicated in the case of gender

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[207] The 'field' in this instance is International Relations.

mainstreaming. In this way, the future of gender mainstreaming is in the hands, hearts and most of all the imaginations of feminist scholars and activists. By developing innovative research methods, communicating research findings, and by adopting critical but progressive perspectives intellectual feminists can grasp the potential of radical ideas like gender mainstreaming, move out of the margins without fear of appropriation, and begin 'affecting the centre' in profound and permanent ways (Peterson, 1992: 184). The following (and final) Chapter discusses the long-term potential of gender mainstreaming in offering a substantive alternative to gendered policy-making.

PART FOUR: FEMINISM AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Chapter Seven: Is there a Radical Future for Gender Mainstreaming?

7.1 Introduction

This concluding Chapter establishes the significance of the research in terms of determining the long-term impact of 'gender mainstreaming.' In view of the research findings, what is the capacity of gender mainstreaming to be a transformative policy tool in the Irish case? Is there a radical future (Eisenstein, 1993) for gender mainstreaming? The aim of this Chapter, and the thesis as a whole, is to be able to offer a conclusive answer to the questions, and to offer insightful interpretations of the data gathered.

The thesis concludes that gender mainstreaming provides a number of challenges and opportunities for policy-makers and feminist activists and theorists.[208] The diversity of feminisms evident in the project, the continuing impact of multilateral organisations in the implementation process (Bhatta, 2001), and the capacity of national level bureaucracy to re-configure in order to accommodate gender (Mossink, 2001), establish a research agenda for the mainstreaming project.

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[208] The literature has tended to focus on the challenges presented by gender mainstreaming (True, 2003; Woodward, 2003; Mazey, 2000), but opportunities presented by gender mainstreaming are also significant.

The Chapter draws theoretical conclusions from the research. How does the introduction of gender mainstreaming impact on national discourses regarding gender, bureaucracy and feminism? Some national implications are applicable to global feminism, particularly, co-ordination between feminist activists and theorists (True, 2003), and the dependence of policy development on a firm conceptual basis in political theory (von Braunmühl, in Braig and Wölte, 2002). These implications are assessed in some detail. The long-term impact of gender mainstreaming for feminism, particularly feminist knowledge, is discussed. The thesis concludes that the possibility of a radical future for gender mainstreaming may exist, as long as intellectual and practice-oriented aspects of the process are co-ordinated to produce conceptual clarification and challenging but workable policy tools (Moser, 1993; 5 quoted in Wieringa, 1994; 835).

7.2 The Implications of Gender Mainstreaming for Global Feminism

This Chapter reflects on the variety of potential and observable implications of gender mainstreaming for global feminism. Firstly, if gender mainstreaming has developed primarily at the level of practice, does this signify a lack of co-ordination between activists and theorists? Secondly, does gender mainstreaming reveal a missing link between feminist theory and feminist practice? Does gender mainstreaming reveal that it is impossible to develop effective practices in the absence of a coherent theoretical base? Will the relative failure of gender mainstreaming in practice result in the idea of 'mainstreaming' as a feminist policy method being marginalised within mainstream

bureaucracy? Finally, the Chapter concludes that while many of these questions have serious implications for feminism, gender mainstreaming also raises a number of opportunities for feminism. Opportunities include: the creation of a common language to articulate the priorities of mainstream and feminist policy-makers. Also, the development of the concept of gender as a relational category facilitating the critique of gendered structures based on human agency rather than the emancipation of women, *per se.*[209] The Chapter concludes with a synopsis of the contribution of the thesis in terms of the explicit articulation and conceptual development of gender mainstreaming.

By concentrating on the case of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland, this thesis has sought to highlight the difficulties in integrating international standards of gender equality into a conservative political culture at nation-state level. The approach taken in this thesis appealed to the research agenda established by early scholars of gender mainstreaming. True and Mintrom (2001):

> '... case-specific work could be extended to assess implementation processes and the degree to which initial design choices affect longer-term institutional effectiveness' (True and Mintrom, 2001; 51).

True and Mintrom (2001; 49) identified this approach as particularly appealing given gender mainstreaming dependence on global actors to

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[209] 'By categorising men and women oppositionally, and equating masculinity with humanness, Western philosophy has denied all women – and others stigmatised as feminine – the privileged status of being fully 'human' (Peterson, 1994; 193). In this way, gender mainstreaming can become more than the sum of its parts, and build on a long history of feminist critique of patriarchal institutions, ideologies and social constructs.

> 'cajole government decision-makers to expedite policy change, we must expect elements of national governance to be critical for facilitating the adoption of gender mainstreaming mechanisms.'

Arguably, my case-specific focus has been successful in that the Irish case illustrates many of the challenges that gender mainstreaming presents for global feminism. First, the diversity within feminism must be conceptualised as the pervasiveness of feminist goals rather than as a split within a marginal political movement.[210] Processes such as gender mainstreaming go some way towards achieving a feminist consensus while avoiding previous problems of universality (Persram, 1994). The second challenge is to engage in dialogue with the mainstream. Retaining political goals is no doubt an easier task if one remains at the margins (hooks, 1996; 48). However, once the decision to mainstream is made, issues of communication, dialogue and avoiding co-optation replace political petitioning.

> 'For the first time in our history we were being offered the opportunity to attempt to implement what for years we had been writing, yelling, marching and working towards. Not to respond would have felt as if our bluff had been called' (Reid quoted in Eisenstein, 1996; 20).[211]

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[210] See Molyneaux, M. (1998) 'Analysing Women's Movements' in Jackson, C. and Pearson, R. (eds.) *Feminist Visions of Development: gender, analysis and policy* London: Routledge for a detailed discussion of the origins and strengths of women's movements as a source of political activism and theoretical innovation.

[211] Reid was Australia's first women's advisor (Eisenstein, 1996; 19).

The dialogue ensuing from the entrance of feminists into policy-making itself becomes a bone of contention. This thesis has argued that once feminists enter bureaucracy, communication between feminists and mainstream policy-makers is key to the success of 'mainstreaming' gender equality as a social goal. However, I conclude that in the absence of mutual understanding and a shared basis on which knowledge about policy-making can be re-built, *as yet*, there exists no mutual vocabulary to facilitate the process (see Chapter 3). Later, in Chapter 6, it emerges that communication problems are related to deeper ideological dichotomies between gender mainstreaming and mainstream policy-making.

Nevertheless, I claim that gender mainstreaming is a watershed for feminism as a means to converse with the mainstream, and introduce feminist ideas into male dominated policy-making systems. Moreover, the implementation of gender mainstreaming at least offers the opportunity for feminists working on the policy, to systematically and legitimately examine policy-making for its gender bias.[212] Indeed, the practice-oriented development of gender mainstreaming could prove beneficial in terms of the contribution of the project to feminist theory, not least in developing a critique of some of the more dogmatic and puritanical positions taken by post-modern feminists (Zalewski, 2002 in Braig and Wölte, 2002). Lastly, the thesis also asserts that the introduction of gender mainstreaming offers an opportunity to instruct mainstream policy-makers that there is a feminist alternative to patriarchal practices, practices that at best ignore gender issues, and are sometimes overtly and systematically gender biased.[213]

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[212] Specifically with the employment of *femocrats* by the state (Eisenstein, 1996).

[213] For instance, the failure to include unpaid labour in national accounts, the privileging of 'productive' work culturally and economically, the illegality of abortion, to mention just a few incidences of patriarchal policy in the Republic of Ireland. The illegality of abortion is important as while many women are against abortion all are subject to the law on termination or pregnancy.

It is arguable that, in the long-run, the existence of gender mainstreaming machineries within the heart of mainstream bureaucracy is as important as its observable 'successes' as a policy initiative. Its existence suggests the creation of a space for gender equality as a legitimate goal within mainstream bureaucracy. As such, gender mainstreaming provides an opportunity for global feminism to engage with mainstream politics in a manner which operates on a new power dynamic. The temptation to dismiss gender issues as irrelevant to the core tasks of a policy-making system is great for the simple reason that it is far from easy to devise workable gender policy that will yield meaningful results (see Chapters 2, 3 and 6). However, a commitment to 'mainstream' gender requires bureaucracies to at least try to develop means by which mainstream and gender issues can achieve equivalent status as policy. Woodward (2003) notes that gender mainstreaming has the potential to radically alter policy-making processes. However,

> 'Reaching this place ironically requires a strategic usage of the practices and existing language of politics and government, including building alliances to create contexts where gender awareness is a given and equality a constant goal' (Woodward, 2003; 84).

The existence of a specific, identifiable and named policy called 'gender mainstreaming' renders policy-makers' attempts to ignore gender issues visible. To summarise, it is arguable that even failed attempts to mainstream gender are valuable for four reasons. Firstly, as argued above, the existence of gender mainstreaming machineries creates a precedent for gender equality that legitmates it as a policy goal (Eisenstein, 1996). Secondly, the introduction of feminists into mainstream bureaucracy in order to develop

mainstreamed policy has the effect of creating internal gender think-tanks (NDP Gender Equality Unit), with time and resources to apply a working knowledge of gender issues to substantive policy problems.[214] As a result, gender mainstreaming may contribute to feminist knowledge of bureaucratic politics, and mainstream knowledge of gender issues (True, 2003; 387). Thirdly, the long-term implications of gender mainstreaming suggest that investment in gender training, personnel and capacity building amongst permanent bureaucrats has potential to change minds and ultimately policy direction in the future.

> 'We'd look and see what's the best way to do it and respond in due course – maybe 5 years later. Most things are incremental, you can't change the system' (Author Interview, R10, July 2002; 4)

Finally, gender mainstreaming provides an opportunity for cross-pollination between different branches of feminism (Eisenstein, 1993; 264-5), where theory develops from a wealth of experience, and where liberal feminism is radicalised to produce a workable but genuinely challenging feminist politics. Following Hester Eisenstein (1996; 210), I draw on the work of her namesake Zillah Eisenstein who

> 'argued that liberal politics had a radical core, in that even what appeared to be mild reforms fundamentally changed the gender arrangements (and therefore the foundations) of the current system. Was this the case for the femocrats?' (Eisenstein, 1996; 210).

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[214] The tasks of the NDP Gender Equality Unit are identified as: monitoring the extent to which NDP commitments on gender equality are being met, providing advice, training and information on issues relating to gender mainstreaming in the NDP. Others include collecting and analysing data to support gender mainstreaming and engaging in a research programme to assess and support gender mainstreaming. See http://www.ndpgenderequality.ie

Hester Eisenstein (1996) concludes that the position of the femocrat was

> 'circumscribed from the outset by the fact that she is a government employee' (Eisenstein, 1996; 211).

This made 'a strong alliance between insiders in government and outsiders in the women's movement' (Eisenstein, 1996; 211), crucial to the femocrats' ability to influence policy. I concur, as does True (2003) that a similar alliance is necessary in the case of gender mainstreaming.

> 'There are too few links between between gender advocates inside mainstreaming institutions and feminist activists and scholars 'on the outside'' (True, 2003; 387).

However, such cross-pollination can only come about through the recognition of the inter-relatedness of theory and practice in relation to mainstreaming. Specifically, through the co-ordinated efforts of those working separately (but simultaneously) on intellectual and practical aspects of feminist politics and gender mainstreaming.

> 'Only collectively...can we expand the local and global spaces for promoting women's empowerment and for transforming the sources of social power that reproduce inequalities' (True, 2003; 387).

The following section of the Chapter provides some examples of how developing gender mainstreaming in practice depends on the development of a defiant theoretical feminism, to underpin policy tool-making and bureaucratic innovation. In turn, the practical experience of gender mainstreaming can challenge feminist theorists to develop more situated theories, working from a 'grass-roots' basis, though this time the grass-roots are

bureaucrats and femocrats rather than non-governmental organisations. Again, True (2003):

> 'We can raise theoretical issues, and develop innovative research projects that link gender relations at the micro level with processes and policies at the macro level, and that help feminist activists and policymakers to achieve their goals' (True, 2003; 388).

7.2.1. Making Theory from Practice.

The thesis firmly establishes that in order to move forward with gender mainstreaming the definitional inconsistencies and theoretical disagreements around the concept must be addressed. Zillah Eisenstein (1993; 3) identifies the under-theorisation of liberal feminism as a key inhibitor in its development both as a theory and a practice. She also states that liberal theory has, in some instances, inhibited the development of feminist praxis, as evidenced in the 'contradictory basis' of liberal feminism. Nevertheless, she maintains that liberal feminism has radical potential:

> 'This book documents the radical potential of feminism reflected in the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Harriet Taylor, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton that grows out of the contradictory base of liberal feminism. In other words, the contradiction between liberalism (as patriarchal and individualist in structure and

ideology) and feminism (as sexual egalitarian and collectivist) lays the basis for feminism's movement beyond liberalism' (Eisenstein, 1993; 3).

Eisenstein also notes, however, that under-theorisation of a feminist political agenda is also an inhibiting factor in that

'liberal feminist politics has moved beyond its own theory' (Eisenstein, 1993; 3).

The central difficulty with theoretical deficiency is that in the absence of conceptual and theoretical parameters political strategies can become amorphous, lose sight of their central goals, or become appropriated by prevalent policies and politics. The inhibited development of gender mainstreaming within the National Development Plan in the Republic of Ireland is, perhaps, one such incident. Eisenstein (1993; 3-4) identifies Hartsock's (1979; 11-12) thoughts on the theory/practice relationship as progressive;

'Forming theory out of practice, articulating what is taking place, does not come quickly or easily, and it is rarely clear what direction the theory will finally take. It requires close attention to practice, and to what diverse groups of people are doing. Contemporary feminism in the United States finds itself in a situation in which the very substantial struggles of women have not yet been "theorized."... Theory itself, then, can be seen as a way of taking up and building on experience' (Hartsock, 1979; 11-12 quoted in Eisenstein, 1993; 3-4).

The thesis concludes, therefore, that studies such as this one can make significant contributions to the broader literature on gender mainstreaming. In light of this contention, this section of the Chapter provides suggestions for how documenting current problems and experiences with gender mainstreaming will help build a stronger theoretical base, so

future efforts will be more successful. Booth and Bennett (2002: 443) identify lack of debate as a contributing factor in the under-conceptualisation of gender mainstreaming:

> '...there remains confusion and misunderstanding surrounding the EU's mainstreaming policy. Arguably, this has resulted from a lack of conceptualisation of mainstreaming. This has not been helped by a lack of academic and practitioner contributions to the debate' (Booth and Bennett, 2002; 443).

As articulated in Chapter 2, and demonstrated in Chapter 6, the main difficulty arising from the development of the theory/practice dichotomy was that the meaning of gender mainstreaming became appropriated by more established values in the policy-making system. These values re-configured the policy according to neo-liberal economic priorities, a system which von Braunmühl (in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 63) recognises are anathema to pursuing a feminist agenda:

> 'Within this system, with its increasingly accentuated polarisation of rich and poor, the relationship between economic and social/human development has ceased to be theorised. Neoliberal policies offer virtually no entry point for the needs, values and rights of women' (von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 63).

This issue is discussed in theoretical terms in Chapter two and in more substantive policy terms in Chapter six. The way out of this problem is two-fold. Firstly, it is necessary to recognise the importance of feminist knowledge as the key to providing imaginative alternatives to established policy. This means making gender mainstreaming a capacity

building exercise that is people (rather than process) centred and which tackles the anti-intellectual strain in the civil service (Author Interview, R15, August 2002).

> 'I think that the Irish civil service is poor at conceptualizing why do we do things. It is driven politically, by men, who are politically correct, and push it because they are afraid not to. There is an obsession with data and a lack of obsession with ideas. That is a very anti-intellectual strain in the Irish civil service' (Author Interview, R24, September 2002; 5).

This policy-maker reports the privileging of processes over ideas in the Irish burueaucracy. However, feminists have envisaged a different, more politically engaged approach to evaluating policy. Von Braunmühl (in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 76) draws on Alvarez's (1999) vision of how NGO's approach integrating gender, emphasising:

> '... more procees-oriented forms of feminist cultural-political intervention – such as consciousness-raising, popular education or other strategies aimed at transforming those gender power relations manifest in the realms of public discourse, culture and daily life – forms of gendered injustice that defy gender planning quick fixes' (Alvarez, 1999: 198 quoted in von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 76).

Alvarez's vision appears as a stark alternative to performance indicators and gender proofing, but it does demonstrate how feminist knowledge, skills and experience could be used, not only to 'mainstream gender,' but to genuinely politicise policy.

The second method of addressing the problems arising from the disproportionate development of practice over theory is to pursue a multi-lateral approach when implementing gender mainstreaming. This involves combining training and tool development with conceptual development. Such a process would require greater co-ordination between bureaucracies and universities in order to apply research findings immediately,[215] and increased co-ordination with NGOs to develop a multi-lateral approach to gender issues. This approach was recognised by feminist policy-makers:

> 'Organisations like the National Women's Council of Ireland are important and influential. That sort of commitment to NGOs is very important...we engage with the advocacy groups a lot more now, which helps to influence things (Author Interview, R19, August 2002; 5).

This kind of development is also recognised by Woodward (2003; 84-85):

> 'The case of mainstreaming is a demonstration of how gender issues can spur creativity and can potentially transform policy-making' (Woodward, 2003: 84-85)

A multi-lateral approach requires that a body of knowledge amongst practitioners, founded on strong theoretical grounds, be built. Such knowledge will make policy-makers aware of potential pitfalls, appropriations and other concerns. In effect, policy-makers would be educated about the social construction of gender, and how institutions reproduce inequalities. This differs from the current situation where policy-makers are trained to gender-proof established policies.[216] The aim of this approach would be to reduce the risk

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[215] Throughout this project I have endeavoured to produce maximum impact on policy from my findings. Plans are underway to co-publish my dissertation with research undertaken by the former Head of the NDP Gender Equality Unit, as a theoretically proficient and policy-relevant textbook on gender mainstreaming.

[216] See table 1 for an explanation of the difference between gender proofing and gender mainstreaming.

of becoming another 'add women and stir' policy, but, rather, develop a constituency of policy-makers who have the tools, knowledge and political will to influence the policy-making system. By adopting multi-lateral tactics, where gender equality policy is part of an overall feminist strategy which pursues a number of goals simultaneously on a number of different fronts, potential appropriation can be avoided. True (2003; 384) identifies how gender mainstreaming needs the accompaniment of critique by activists and scholars:

> '...gender mainstreaming efforts from above will not change institutional practices and norms unless they are supported by social movement activism on gender equity and subjected to the ongoing critical scrutiny of a gender perspective by feminist scholars and activists' (True, 2003; 384).

Identifying the key role of feminism in the future of gender mainstreaming has two long-term implications. Firstly, it implies that there may be long-term benefits to the existence of gender mainstreaming beyond its immediate impact on current policies. Such long-term benefits include the possibility of expanding the knowledge base regarding gender amongst policy-makers.[217] Moreover, this knowledge base makes a significant contribution to theoretical mainstreaming, particularly in augmenting understanding of policy-making amongst feminists (True, 2003; 381):

> 'As scholars, we need to become more knowledgeable about the worlds of advocacy and policy' (True, 2003; 381).

Notably, the existence of gender mainstreaming requires research and theoretical work that provides a forum, funding and institutional support for the development of innovative

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[217] If the vocabulary of gender mainstreaming was to become part of policy-making lexicography, this could have re-configure the status of women as 'dependents and welfare recipients' in policy-making (True, 2003; 375).

intellectual feminism such as developing new methodologies for exploring mainstreaming (Mazey, 2000), and examining the relationship between mainstream and feminist politics (Braig and Wölte, 2000). Moreover, gender mainstreaming calls for the examination of the relationship between policy and ideology itself (this thesis). So, while the prospect of 'making theory from practice when the practice is muddy' (Woodward, 1999) may be fraught with difficulties, it can also be interpreted as a genuinely new opportunity for both feminist and mainstream politics. The following section investigates whether gender mainstreaming can move feminist politics forward without removing the power of feminism as critique. Could gender mainstreaming imply that feminism itself is going mainstream?

7.2.2. Appropriation of Feminism by 'Mainstreaming'

As argued throughout this thesis, exclusion from male-dominated political institutions has forced women to operate outside the boundaries of the mainstream.[218] As such, feminism is essentially a social movement and all developments from feminism, including feminist theory and methodology, originate in that social movement. It is not surprising, then, that the feminist viewpoint is an alternative to the mainstream and often operates on alternative epistemological and ideological bases. Let us return to Harding's reference to Marcia Millman, who points out the benefits of social movements that,

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[218] Eisenstein, (1993; 96) relates this exclusion to the increasingly rigid delineation of public and private sphere with the onset of capitalist patriarchy from the 18th century.

> 'make it possible for people to see the world in an enlarged perspective because they remove the covers and blinders that obscure knowledge and observation' (Harding, 1991; 183).[219]

Gender mainstreaming is a concrete example of the ideas and aspirations of a social movement bearing fruit; that is, ideas central to feminism being translated into a plan of action for the achievement of gender equality. However, this development is a long-term challenge. Feminists theorizing the international claim that:

> 'gendered values and norms can change over time. The challenge of feminism is to expose the manner in which meaning is constructed and to propose alternative norms' (Ward, 1999; 216).

Any changes in gender norms are related to power relations between feminism and mainstream institutions, epistemologies, methodologies and politics. As such, politics is at the core of the gender mainstreaming debate:

> 'Without a consideration of power relationships, the transformative potential of mainstreaming will come to naught' (Woodward, 2001; 142).

Gender mainstreaming presents the possibility of a new set of power relations between feminist politics and mainstream bureaucracy. True (2003) quotes the work of Australian feminist scholars in arguing that

> 'the state is not inherently patriarchal, but an ongoing construction' (True, 2003; 382).

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[219] Galligan (1998) provides a detailed and thorough analysis of how the women's movement revealed the patriarchal nature of Irish politics and policy-making.

Likewise, Eisenstein (1996; xxi) concludes that, while for the most part the state may be patriarchal, it is not irredeemably so:

> 'I do not assume that bureaucracy is intrinsically and irrevocably "masculine," that is patriarchal. Indeed, that would be an essentialist position. But the evidence from my interviews shows the degree to which male assumptions and behaviours constrained and limited women's freedom to maneuver. Nonetheless, femocrats developed ways of using their presence as women to establish pockets of a distinctly alternative bureaucratic culture' (Eisenstein, 1996; *xxi*).

However, Woodward (2003) notes how gender mainstreaming also has the potential to regress feminist politics:

> 'Settings where political groups hope to reverse the progress of equality can use mainstreaming in dangerous ways, dismantling women's policy machinery and committing no resources in their place' (Woodward, 2003; 84).

Woodward (2003), nevertheless, concludes that gender mainstreaming

> 'has the potential to permanently transform the language and images of policy making and images of policy making to become more inclusive and sensitive to diversity beginning with sex' (Woodward, 2003; 84).

These conclusions suggest the possibility that challenging current practices could influence bureaucratic and political power structures. In her discussion of the intellectual and practical development of gender mainstreaming, Mazey (2000; 342) claims that the policy must be accompanied by

> 'increased representation of women in public and private decision-making institutions, which may themselves be redesigned to accommodate women's needs' (Mazey, 2000; 342).

There is little doubt that the increased status of gender knowledge within mainstream bureaucracies augments the status of feminism amongst policy-makers and legislators.[220] Concepts such as 'gender' 'gender blind,' 'gender equality,' developed within feminism, are deemed necessary to implement gender mainstreaming. Sustained efforts to implement gender mainstreaming may lead to them becoming part of everyday bureaucratic discourse (Morgan quoted in True, 2003; 375). Woodward (2003) recognises some long-term consequences from the penetration of mainstream policy-making lexicography:

> 'Mainstreaming began initially by speaking the language of modern management, which is result driven, requiring instrumental and rational measurement. This may ultimately bring about a heightened ability for policy makers to deal with the cross-cutting problems of inequality that breach rational models' (Woodward, 2003: 85).

However, fear that not just gender mainstreaming, but feminist politics itself will be appropriated by the process of 'mainstreaming,' for many feminists[221] outweighs the potential gains. This fear is eloquently stated by Woodward (2001) in earlier work:

> 'As a social movement, the women's movement in many countries has taken a well-considered position outside the establishment, to maintain its clarity of

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[220] '(names gender equality expert)'s unit is doing well. Most people are very interested and want to do it. You get the odd person who doesn't want to do it for some personal or ideological reason but most people are willing to at least explore the issue' (Author Interview, R21, September 2002; 3).

[221] '...the women's movement has concentrated on being critical of the gender mainstreaming. At least the academic wing of the women's movement has been really critical' (Author Interview, R22, September 2002; 7).

analysis and challenge. By moving inside, in the guise of femocrats or other agents, there are necessary compromises which may ultimately prove fatal to the viability of the movement' (Woodward, 2001: 134).

While this fear has some grounds, the experience of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland suggests that this fear is offset by heterogeneity within feminism. Chapters 2 and 3 discussed in some detail how fundamental differences between various branches of feminism: liberal, radical, socialist, post-modern, intellectual and activist, result in multiple interpretations of gender mainstreaming as a concept, a practice, a tool, an international norm, an EU initiative or a sell out (Bretheron, 2002; Mazey, 2000; Woodward 2001; 2003; True and Mintrom, 2001). A high level of disagreement amongst feminists in the development of gender mainstreaming at the international level made producing a generally workable gender mainstreaming policy difficult. While the thesis identifies this scenario as an impediment to the development of gender mainstreaming, it also suggests that the possibility of mainstreaming becoming paradigmatic to the extent where it replaces positive action, feminist lobbying, legislation, radical objection, intellectual critique or any other form of feminist political engagement, is slim. The thesis also established that bureaucrats do not implement radically directed policies like gender mainstreaming easily, given the context of neo-liberal policy-making (Chapter 6). These ideological constraints combined with the heterogeneity of feminist critiques[222] render the possibility of feminism itself becoming mainstreamed very unlikely. This point is

[222] There are a number of feminist critiques of neo-liberalism in relation to women in development, gender and development and gender mainstreaming (Bhatta, 2001; True, 2003; Moser, 1993; von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002).

elaborated in the following section, which outlines how multiple feminisms can be used to pursue a multi-lateral political agenda, including gender mainstreaming.

7.2.3. Multilateral Feminism: Epistemic Communities at national and international level

In the context of this thesis it was revealed that authors such as Woodward, and especially Verloo (2001) and Mossink (2001) and, in the Irish case, Duggan constitute an epistemic community[223] of considerable influence given the level of uncertainty surrounding gender mainstreaming (Haas, 1992; 3). The co-habitation of gender experts with bureaucrats is one instance where the inter-relatedness of intellectual and real world mainstreaming (Mazey, 2000) can be explicitly observed. As such, the thesis investigated how intellectual and real world mainstreaming are inter-related in very specific ways; through examining the literature on gender mainstreaming (Chapter 3); its concern with the practice of gender mainstreaming (Chapters 5 and 6), particularly through following the development of gender mainstreaming at the conceptual level (Chapter 2); and through devising a methodology to investigate the development of gender mainstreaming in a specific institutional context (Chapter 4).

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[223] Haas (1992; 3) identifies an epistemic community as having four essential characteristics. The findings of this research suggest that conceptualising feminists working on gender mainstreaming in terms of the essential characteristics of an epistemic community aids our understanding of the problems and potentialities of gender mainstreaming identified throughout the thesis. Firstly, the existence of basic shared values and principles suggest that feminism provides 'a value-based rationale for the social action of community members' (Haas, 1992; 3). In terms of shared causal beliefs, feminism is a little problematic as there is disagreement amongst feminists as to what are the essential 'desired outcomes' (Haas, 1992; 3) of feminism as a community. Finally, feminist communities have identified a common policy enterprise, gender mainstreaming.

While the theory-practice gap may be evident to scholars, the role of theory in the practical development of gender mainstreaming was less obvious to policy-makers. For instance, the position of feminists as an epistemic community was not explicitly recognised by policy-makers interviewed for this research. The general sense amongst policy-makers was that gender mainstreaming was an institutionally derived practice, essentially an initiative of the EU (Author Interview, R5, July 2002; R4, July 2002). However, once it became apparent that it required some expertise to devise methods to gender mainstream policy, members of the epistemic community were called as consultants (Duggan on positive action; Zappone on gender training; Galligan on performance indicators) to help develop tools for gender mainstreaming. Identifying transnational feminist networks, particularly at the expert level, provided a clear connection between intellectual and real world mainstreaming.[224] Identification of the role of feminism as an epistemic community is a central contribution of the thesis and is suggested as a basis for future research. Questions to be posed in future research into gender mainstreaming should include: Do these experts know their power? Does lack of agreement between gender experts, particularly those with a background and training in intellectual feminism impede them in accessing this new-found power? Could experts become co-opted into the rational bureaucratic management loop as highly paid consultants?[225]

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[224] Those with a feminist background and/or education were imported into bureaucracy from academe, or are employed as consultants to help develop the practice of gender mainstreaming.

[225] True (2003; 382-3) has already flagged this possibility, working on the basis that the loyalty of gender experts in development programmes may have shifted from feminism to government.

Certainly, the divisions and disagreements in relation to what constitutes valid knowledge have inhibited the development of gender mainstreaming. Identifying these divisions helps one to gain an understanding of gender mainstreaming as a liberal strategy with radical potential. Von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte (2002) is in agreement:

> 'The interaction between an administratively mediated system rationale and the dynamics and aspirations of the women's movement needs to be explored in some detail, rather than prematurely discarded on the basis of an analysis that treats them as dichotomous' (von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 76).

The apparently contradictory basis of gender mainstreaming is understandable, given that the epistemic communities that devised it are neither homogenous nor harmonious in any sense. Incorporating feminist debates into an examination of gender mainstreaming, gained from an

> 'analysis of practices leading or contributing to a central set of problems...' (Haas, 1992; 3).

provides a strong argument for the pursuit of a multilateral feminist strategy in the future. Multiple communities, under the broad umbrella, 'feminism,' can pursue a number of different strategies at once. The essentially liberal, reformist agenda of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland, for instance, can be pursued simultaneously with powerful feminist critiques of gender mainstreaming in academe, and more substantive interpretations of the policy in social democratic states.[226] If gender mainstreaming demonstrates the feminist capacity for multilateral theory-building and

[226] One policy-maker, stated how in a social democratic state gender mainstreaming is viewed as part of policy-making at all levels in that country: '...[named country] is seeing differential treatment in system at all levels. Women present with more health issues. Men get more expensive drugs. Front line delivery people are dealing with gender mainstreaming in their work' (Author Interview, R10, July 2002; 9).

political activity to mainstream policy-makers, and nothing more, it will have made a contribution to contemporary feminist politics. Eisenstein (1996; 213) came to a similar conclusion in relation to the work of femocrats:

> 'Femocrats effected a remarkable process of education within the government and among the public about the importance of using gender as a frame for policy-analysis' (Eisenstein, 1996; 213).

The following section argues that mainstream/feminist dialogue plays an important role in asserting gender mainstreaming as a feminist enterprise.

7.2.4. From Oppositional Constructs to Relational Categories[227]: developing gender mainstreaming through dialogue.

This study has worked from contentions made by Woodward (2001) and Verloo (2001) that gender issues are everywhere and that everything is a gender issue (Woodward, 2001; 5; Verloo, 2001; 3). The problem, they claim, is that the normative positioning in feminism may get lost in this approach. This thesis argues that genuine dialogue between policy-makers and feminists is needed in order for gender mainstreaming to develop concepts and categories that enable it to bi-locate itself in terms of the way the world is (and how it could be). This bi-location can reveal the gender bias suffered by both sexes in a patriarchal system. Patriarchy has carved out roles for men and women according to

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[227] Peterson, 1992, *op. cit.*

rigid and hierarchical concepts of femininity and masculinity. These concepts lead to social constructions of what is 'truly' masculine or feminine, for instance, the presumption that women are nature's carers, peace-loving and physically weaker than men (True, 2003; 383). As these two concepts are related dichotomously, patriarchal masculinity states that men are prone towards violence, breadwinners rather than parents, and are physically stronger than women (Eisenstein, 1993). Von Braunmühl (in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 75-6) identifies hybridity as a concept which could release gender mainstreaming from this fractious dichotomy. She identifies:

> '...hybridity as the condition that allows women's organisations to balance bureaucratic demands and neo-liberal rationales with the dynamics and perspectives of social movements in search of political, economic and social gender justice' (Von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 76).

Hybridity, she claims, could allow for a perspective that

> 'places agency back in the hands of women's organisations' (Von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 76).

Following this logic, moving away from dichotomous thinking could allow for an alternative to traditional gender binaries (state v. feminism, man v. woman, science v. nature). A radical conception of gender mainstreaming tries to overturn such stereotyping. A bi-cultural and bi-lingual approach that can accommodate feminist innovation within bureaucratic constraints will be the most likely to unleash the potential of gender mainstreaming from the current basis for policy-making outlined in Chapters 5 and 6. Such radical change requires imaginative alternatives where policy does not reproduce the

gendered division of labour, sexualised and powerless images of female sexuality or privilege masculine power and paid labour outside the home.

Achieving these changes is at least to some extent dependent on co-ordination between those with knowledge and experience of working with gender (feminists) and those with knowledge and experience in policy-making (policy-makers).

> 'It is a new combination of utopia and strategy that is wanted' (Rowbotham, 1991; 200 quoted in Eisenstein, 1996; 204).

To achieve this co-ordination a dialogue is necessary. The extent to which this dialogue produces progressive and influential (as opposed to stagnant or unchallenging) policy is based on interpretations of gender mainstreaming by both communities. The thesis has shown that how gender mainstreaming is perceived reflects what it will become (Chapters 2, 3 and 6). Its potential lies in the capacity it has to allow the intellectual and political imaginations of policy-makers, practitioners and feminists to envisage not only how policies may change, but how new priorities could promote a policy spectrum based on more substantive and imaginative assumptions about political organisation. There is already some evidence of how open-minded, pragmatic idealists can achieve change.[228] This new policy would be based on values and beliefs that incorporate conceptions of humanity which account for affective relations (caring), the value of human life (unpaid work), and prioritise peace, self-determination, political emancipation and full, open and

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[228] For instance, permanent feminist policy-makers ensured the future of the Department of Equality and Law Reform by gaining funding for childcare in the early 1990s and building the equality portfolio from there (Author Interview, R2, June 2002). Likewise, the Gender Equality Expert gained ground for gender despite a hostile environment through encouraging greater representation of women on monitoring committees of the National Development Plan (Author Interview, R6, July 2002). Meanwhile, intellectual feminists such as Duggan (2004) provide imaginative means of expanding established policy by combining mainstreaming with positive action measures.

equal democratic participation (Campbell, 2004). This form of policy would produce the kind of genuine equality where individual and collective political rights find a balance with family and economic priorities, and which emancipate human beings according to sustainable goals.[229] While we may be a long way from achieving these goals in the Irish case, such optimistic visions of how social and political organisation could be is an important factor in avoiding the potential for co-optation critics of mainstreaming so frequently express (Woodward, 2003).[230]

In learning from the Irish case, it would do well to remember that dialogue is a two-way process, as such, feminists do have power, especially given the legitimacy international agreements like the Platform for Action ascribe to knowledge of current gender issues.

> '...we can continually evaluate local and global policies and practices in light of the principles and norms that have been collectively developed by women's movements over the past twenty years and codified in living documents such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action' (True, 2003: 388).

Again, Haas (1992; 2) recognises the power bestowed on epistemic communities due to their expert-knowledge. In terms of gender mainstreaming, the epistemic community can use it as an opportunity to put a number of issues on the policy map: childcare, female political representation, the gender pay gap, how masculinist conceptions of politics lead to excessive use of military force, and the predominance of economic concerns in policy-

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[229] These aims echo some of the goals of development policy (Jahan, 1995; Baden and Goetz, 1997)

[230] To be fair, Woodward (2001; 2003) would probably be best described as a critical proponent of gender mainstreaming.

making, to name but a few. The thesis concludes that if the central problem of feminist-mainstream dialogue can be overcome, gender mainstreaming does have a future.[231] Once gender is viewed and articulated as relational, gender mainstreaming can evolve as a dialogue between mutually dependent political communities.

> 'Indeed, much is to be gained from an interface analysis that conceptualises gender mainstreaming as negotiation space between actors of different social character' (von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002; 76)

If this dialogue shifts the foundations of feminist-mainstream debate away from oppositional constructs in favour of relational gender identities, then gender mainstreaming could realise the hopes proponents had for it: to be a Trojan horse (Woodward, 2001; 133); a velvet revolution (Verloo, 2001; 1); a magic wand (Mossink, 2001; 1); 'a global strategy for achieving gender equality' (True, 2003; 369), or; a 'transformation' (Rees, 1998). But, the future of gender mainstreaming is dependent on how it is interpreted. We have seen what happens when it is interpreted at its minimum (Republic of Ireland). The thesis concludes that if it is interpreted at its maximum,[232] and articulated as such in dialogue with mainstream policy-makers, it can realise what some scholars now recognise as its potential, to become a 'liberal politics' with a 'radical future' (True, 2003; 373). The concluding section re-visits the main arguments of the thesis, reviewing the possibility of a radical future for gender mainstreaming.

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[231] Admittedly, this is a tall order given the fact that it ultimately entails removing patriarchy and the concept of the abstract individual, two primary barriers to understanding often rendered invisible by their very familiarity. Nevertheless, identifying what is necessary for gender mainstreaming to produce the radical restructuring of policy originally intended increases the possibility (however slim) of achieving these changes.

[232] At its maximum, gender mainstreaming would be conceived as Eisenstein (1996) claims Australian femocrats saw their role, to 'stretch the limits of reform by redefining women's issues as mainstream issues. By conceptualising what happened to women in the broadest terms, as a reflection of the priorities of society as a whole, femocrats challenged conventional wisdom' (Eisenstein, 1996; 43).

7.3 Conclusion: Theoretical Considerations for a Radical Future

In this thesis I have sought to demonstrate the usefulness of feminist arguments about knowledge construction when analyzing the global feminist praxis gender mainstreaming. I have used the case of the Republic of Ireland to demonstrate that gender mainstreaming is a significant development for feminist theory and practice. Employing ideas about feminist knowledge and methodology transformed my research from a study of a marginalized policy in a small country to a critically engaged interrogation of one instance of a global feminist practice. This approach has allowed some response to suggestions made by earlier scholars of gender mainstreaming. For instance, Mazey (2000: 341) argues that the focus of EU gender equality policy on

> 'exclusive concern with the rights of women in the workplace... have, in theory at least, been transcended by the adoption by the EU in 1996 of gender mainstreaming' (Mazey, 2000: 341).

Findings from the Republic of Ireland presented in this thesis suggest that gender mainstreaming has, as yet, failed to legitimate gender policy beyond labour market and economic issues. Moreover, by engaging with the feminist literature in order to interpret and explain gender mainstreaming my study became an analysis of one aspect of contemporary feminism in theory and practice. The difficulties and potentialities in terms of vocabulary, knowledge building and policy-making that gender mainstreaming raises for feminism cannot be ignored. True (2003: 387) remarks that

> 'gender mainstreaming in the realm of global governance opens up an important new area for critical study' (True 2003: 387).

The aim of this final section is to provide a sketch of what a radical future of gender mainstreaming might require. The section concludes that the potential of gender mainstreaming can only be accessed if it is genuinely identified as a tool of feminist politics as opposed to a surrender of feminist ideals.[233]

A radical version of gender mainstreaming would call for the re-orientation of the values on which policy-making is based (Woodward, 2003: 68).[234] This form of mainstreaming would require changes in policy-making beyond superficial adjustments to budgets and programmes to incorporate gender. Rather, it would produce a new form of policy-learning based on the idea that gender is a key organising principle of politics and society (Galligan, 2000). Theoretical (re)considerations of gender mainstreaming are needed to pluck the concept from the mess of practicalities which it has become, and return to the initial idea, but in light of what we have learnt from its first introduction post-Beijing. This re-visitation establishes more challenging and coherent theoretical grounds on which gender mainstreaming can be based. Such firm foundations could produce a more radical and profoundly challenging version of gender mainstreaming to be developed in practice.

The process of radicalisation can begin by viewing the current vagueness of gender mainstreaming as an opportunity for feminists to maximally interpret it and develop it in

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[233] To see the merit in gender mainstreaming, one must view using government to pursue feminist goals as a legitimate political tactic (Woodward, 2003).

[234] This would entail, for example, moving away from traditional conceptions of economic output as paid work in the public sphere, in favour of budgets compiled on the premise of productive and reproductive contributions, with consequences for pensions, social welfare etc.

its most radical form. Von Braunmühl (in Braig and Wölte, 2002: 60-62) offers an interesting critique of Moser's notion of gender planning in which she identifies a means of realising the transformative potential of gender mainstreaming by interpreting it as a political aim achieved using bureaucratic institutions:

> 'The purpose of gender planning then is to provide a means by which to operationalise this political concern, and to ensure that it becomes institutionalised practice' (Moser, 1993: 87 quoted in von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002: 61).

This process involves marrying intellectual and 'real world' mainstreaming through identifying multi-lateral roles and activities across the feminist epistemic community. Feminists operating as consultant expert members of the international epistemic community that implements and develops gender mainstreaming, can define 'gender' as a 'relational category'; and define mainstreaming as an opportunity to significantly alter the mainstream (Peterson, 1992; 184). This approach recognises that it is necessary to discard the feminist monologue described earlier (section 6.2.3) by using feminist expertise and knowledge to successfully develop a vocabulary of gender mainstreaming (see appendix 1), which optimises and realises its potential. From this vocabulary, feminists and bureaucrats can build a language, communicate ideas and challenge established structures and dominant ideas. Evidently, there are a multitude of barriers to establishing the necessary prerequisites of a radical gender mainstreaming. Again, von Braunmühl (in Braig and Wölte, 2002: 62) notes a trap to avoid, being overly optimistic as to the potential of bureaucracies as agents of transformation:

> 'Moser puts great trust in the integrity of institutional actors (von Braunmühl in Braig and Wölte, 2002: 62).

All warnings and lessons taken on board, this research suggests that unless intellectual feminism articulates a positive vision of what gender mainstreaming *could* be, it will never amount to anything more than a highly criticised and failed attempt to achieve feminist goals through bureaucratic reform.[235]

In Chapter 2 the three main challenges for gender mainstreaming were identified as the translation of gender mainstreaming from political ideal into effective policy; exclusivity of gender knowledge within feminism; and lack of definition of the concept. How has the research addressed these challenges? Each of these challenges were related to a central problematic, the position of gender mainstreaming somewhere between feminist theory and policy practice. The first challenge, translating gender mainstreaming from feminist ideal into workable policy contains another challenge within: the role of bureaucracy in facilitating this translation.

> 'The transformation of organizational cultures lies at the very heart of mainstreaming. They will undoubtedly remain a powerful barrier to change' (Booth and Bennett, 2002: 443).

The thesis, therefore, was required to deal with the relationship between feminism and bureaucracy, and how bureaucracy promotes prevalent ideologies (Chapter 3). In this way, the thesis identifies that a key means of accessing the potential of gender mainstreaming is

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[235] There have been some recent attempts to achieve this: Woodward (2003: 65).

to bridge the gap between theory/practice (True, 2003) and between ideological and technical issues.[236] The thesis shows how conceptualization of gender mainstreaming impacts on its policy outcome. In the Irish case, a focus on evaluation made gender mainstreaming very data focused: it became a technical process, and in the interim lost its political edge. Intellectual and real world mainstreaming (Mazey, 2000) can be co-ordinated to provide more consistent and effective policy outcomes. Increased co-ordination between practitioners and researchers of gender mainstreaming will allow the practice to be informed by rich qualitative (Carney, 2003; Woodward, 2003) and concrete quantitative research (True and Mintrom, 2001). The former will provide more coherent language and a conceptual base from which policy-makers can work. The latter will provide strong evidence on which the value of gender mainstreaming can be established and proofing and budgeting mechanisms can be refined and developed. Conceptual and technical development are inter-related: coherent conceptual frameworks are necessary in order to develop key aspects of gender mainstreaming. Likewise, knowledge of gender issues, of how gender issues interface with mainstream institutions, and of how consideration of gender can ultimately re-configure established bureaucracy in permanent ways, are key to developing the gender mainstreaming project. The essential gain of reconciling theory and practice in relation to gender mainstreaming is that it identifies the necessity of creating a policy environment where innovation can be introduced into policy-making.[237] Cross-cutting issues such as gender mainstreaming provide an opening through which new ideas can be integrated into established policy:

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[236] For instance, the discussion of data and neo-liberal politics in Chapter 6.
[237] 'Once things get institutionalised then it's a really big battle to change it' (Author Interview, R2, July 2002; 12).

> '...that's the benefit with gender mainstreaming, it centralises the concepts so that they become part of general policy and then you get funding and that's what you want in the long run to become part of the general funding' (Author Interview, R3, July 2002; 5).

In the Republic of Ireland, the Gender Equality Unit can become an internal think-tank as it engages in the work of translating ideas about gender into workable mainstream policy tools. However, it cannot do this without consistent and long-term input from intellectual feminism, whose work clarifies the meaning of gender mainstreaming (Carney, 2002; 2003; Verloo, 2001; Woodward, 2001), evaluates tools such as gender-proofing and gender-budgeting (Galligan et. al., 2000; McGauran, forthcoming), and develops innovative methods of merging mainstream policy with feminist alternatives (Duggan, 2004).[238] Woodward offers a vision of what gender mainstreaming *could* be:

> 'If femocrats, academics and experts in coalition with the women's movement succeed in helping officials to better see the 'Truth' of gender through using the positive aspects of rationality, strategically speaking, it may have been worth it' (Woodward, 2001; 142).

Meanwhile, Eisenstein (1993; 256) envisages the future in accordance with a diversified manifestation of the traditional aim of liberal feminists: to reform public institutions by increasing female representation. This approach suggests that feminists engage with

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[238] Duggan (2004) sketches a workable and theoretically rigorous method for the integration of gender mainstreaming and positive action policy strategies in the Republic of Ireland. This work is an example of the maximal interpretation and coherent articulation necessary to develop gender mainstreaming in the future.

institutions to the extent where their agendas become a legitimate part of the political process.

> 'Maybe this time feminists can make a difference... and we can begin a third wave of the women's movement. This wave will have to be more diverse and inclusive' (Eisenstein, 1993; 256).

Perhaps gender mainstreaming represents an innovation on Eisenstein's (1993) challenge to engage. It certainly provides the means by which feminists can become legitimate members of mainstream institutions. Currently, national and international political institutions are suffering a crisis of legitimacy,[239] this heralds the beginning of a turn in international politics where recognition that stereotyping can be damaging, that the nation-state is no longer the primary unit of analysis and that the continued dismissal of race, gender and environmental concerns as matter for marginal radical extremists is losing credibility.[240] Alternative means of spear-heading changes are sought.

> 'One of the most significant contributions of feminism has been the development of a new perspective on social and political life, one which not only reveals its profoundly unequal and gendered character, but which requires a reassessment of the priorities of states and of the normative social order' (Molyneaux in Jackson and Pearson, 1998: 84).

Perhaps gender mainstreaming represents one small but significant way by which an alternative political reality can be realized.

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[239] Public objections to illegal war (Iraq); US electing G. W. Bush under questionable circumstances; disregard for human rights and evidence of abuse by American and British soldiers (http//:www.bbc.co.uk).

[240] Michael Moore's documentary 'Fahrenheit 9/11' offers a searing critique of a chain of events following the September 11th 2001 terrorist attacks in the World Trade Centre. Moore (2004) argues that the patriarchal, racist and neo-liberal political priorities of the US administration conspire to reduce democratic citizenship to economic utility and radically undermine the democratic process in achieving self-interested ends. While Moore's documentary is certainly biased, its popularity amongst the American public does represent a search for alternative politics in American political culture.

Appendix 1: '100 words for equality' sorted into categories.

Table 2: TERMINOLOGY FOR POLICY-MAKING/PRACTICE **IMPLEMENTING GENDER MAINSTREAMING VOCABULARY**	
Benchmarking	The establishment of a criterion, standard or reference point against which to establish targets and measure progress.
Gender	A concept that refers to the social differences, as opposed to the biological ones, between women and men that have been learned, are changeable over time and have wide variations both within and between cultures
Gender Analysis	The study of differences in the conditions, needs, participation rates, access to resources and development, control of assets, decision-making powers etc. between women and men on their assigned gender roles.
Gender Audit	The analysis and evaluation of policies, programmes and institutions in terms of how they apply gender-related criteria.
Gender blind	Ignoring or failing to address the gender equality dimension.
Gender Dimension	The aspect of any issue which relates to gender/differences in the lives of women and men.
Gender Disaggregated Data	The collection and separation of data and statistical information by gender to enable comparative/gender analysis
Gender equality	The concept that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles; that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally.
Gender mainstreaming	The systematic integration of the respective situations, priorities and needs of women and men in all policies and with a view to promoting equality between women and men and mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality between women and men and mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality by actively and openly taking into account, at the planning stage, their effects on the respective situations of women and men in implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Commission Communication COM (96) 67 final of 21/02/96).

Gender neutral	In policy terms, a policy which has no differential impact, either positive or negative, for equality between women and men.
Gender Impact Assessment	The assessing of policy proposals on any differential impact on women and men, with a view to adapting these proposals to make sure that discrimimatory effects are neutralized and that gender equality is promoted.
Gender Perspective	The consideration and attention to the gender differences in any given policy area/activity.
Gender Planning	An active approach to planning which takes gender as a key variable or criterion and which seeks to integrate an explicit gender dimension into policy or action.
Gender Proofing	A check carried out on any policy proposal to ensure that any potential gender discriminatory effects arising from that policy have been avoided and that gender equality is promoted.
Gender Relevance	The question of whether a particular policy or action is relevant to gender relations/equality between women and men.
Gender Sensitive	Addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.
Sex Disaggregated Statistics	The collection and separation of data and statistical information by sex to enable comparative analysis, sometimes referred to as gender disaggregated statistics.
VOCAB RELATED TO IRISH CASE	
Parity Democracy	The concept of society as equally composed of women and men and that

	their full and equal enjoyment of citizenship is contingent upon their equal representation in political decision-making positions, and that the close or equivalent participation of women and men, within a 40/60 range of representation, in the full democratic process is a principle of democracy.

Table 3: LABOUR MARKET EQUALITY VOCABULARY	
Activity Rate	Represents the labour force as a percentage of working age (16-64).
Atypical Work/Employment	Work which is other than full time and permanent, including part time, evening and weekend work, fixed term work, temporary or sub-contract home based working, teleworking and outwork.
Desegregation of the Labour Market	Policies aiming to reduce or eliminate segregation (vertical/horizontal) in the labour market.
Dignity at Work	The right to respect and in particular freedom from sexual and other forms of harassment in the workplace.
Division of Labour (by gender)	The division of paid and unpaid work between women and men in private and public life.
Economically Active Population	All persons of either sex who supply labour for the production of economic goods and sevices as defined by the UN System of National Accounts, during a specified time period (United Nations).
Family Leave	A right to leave for family reasons which may or may not be shared between the parents.
Family Worker	A family member working in a family business such as a farm, shop, small business or professional practice, frequently a wife, daughter or son.
Flexibility of Working Time/ Working Hours	Formulas of working time which offer range of possibilities in relation to numbers of hours worked and the arrangements of rosters, shifts or work schedules by day, week, month or year.
Gender Distribution of Paid and Unpaid Work	See 'Division of Labour (by gender)'
Gender Pay Differential	The gap between the average earnings of men and women arising from job segregation and direct discriminations.
Hidden Unemployment	Those who are unemployed but who do not meet the requirements of national systems of unemployment registration (requirements which may exclude women in particular).
Homework	Work carried out by a person in his or her home or in other premises of his or her choice, other than the workplace of the employer, for remuneration, which results in a product or service as specified by the employer, irrespective of who provides the equipment, materials or other inputs used (ILO Convention n° 177).
Illegal Work	Work performed by people who do not have legal work permit
Inactivity Rate	All persons who are not classified as employed or unemployed, expressed as a percentage of the population of working age (16-64).
Informal Economy/Work	Unpaid economic activities done for the direct benefit of the household or of related and friends' households on a reciprocal basis, including everyday domestic work and a great variety of self provisioning activities and/or professional activity, whether as a sole or secondary occupation, exercised gainfully and not occasionally, on the limits of, or outside, statutory, regulatory or contractual obligations, but excluding informal activities which are also part of the criminal economy.
Irregular and/or Precarious Employment	Employment which is causal and generally not properly contracted or governed by any pay or social protection regulations.
Job Segregation	The concentration of women and men in different types and levels of activity and employment, with women being confined to a narrower range of occupations (horizontal segregation) than men, and to the lower grades of work (vertical segregation).
Job Sharing	Where a single job, and its remuneration and conditions, is shared by two (typically) or more people working to an agreed pattern or roster.
Maternity Leave	Leave to which a woman is entitled for a continuous period allocated

	before and/or after giving birth in accordance with national legislation and practice (Council Directive 92/85/EEC of 19/10/92, OJ L 348/1)
Mentoring	A sheltered relationship that allows learning and experimentation to take place and personal potential and new skills to flourish through a process in which one person, the mentor, supports the career and development of another, the mentee, outside the normal superior/subordinate relationship. Mentoring is increasingly used to support the personal/professional development of women.
Minimum wage	A wage level defined in law or by agreement which is the lowest possible rate which an employer is permitted to pay.
Occupational Segregation	See job segregation.
Paid Work	Work which is remunerated in cash or kind.
Parental Leave	The individual right, in principle on a non transferable basis, to leave for all male and female workers following the birth or adoption of a child, to enable them to take care of that child (Council Directive 96/34/EEC, of 19/06/96, OJ L 145).
Participation Rates	The rate of participation by a defined group – e.g. women, men, lone parents, etc. – as a percentage of overall participation, usually in employment.
Part-time Employment	Employment for working hours which are shorter than the normal or standard full time hours.
Parental Leave	Usually a fixed amount of leave for the father of a child which may be taken at the time of birth, or fixed amounts of time in any year or period of years which may be taken for reasons concerning the care responsibilities of a father for his child.
Positive Discrimination	See Positive Action
Reconciliation of Work and Family/Household life	The introduction of family and parental leave schemes, child and elderly care arrangements, and the development of a working environment structure and organization which facilitates the combination of work and family/household responsibilities for women and men.
Regulation of Part-time work	The introduction of rules which govern the scope and use of part-time work, aimed at preventing any form of discrimination against part-time workers, improving the quality of part-time work and facilitating the development of part-time work as a choice.
Segregation of the Labour Market	See Job Segregation
Unemployment	Measured against the total labour force, the number of persons who are registered as being without work, seeking work and currently available for work (European Community Labour Force Survey)
Unpaid/Unremunerated Work	Work which carries no direct remuneration or other form of payment (see also Recognition and valuation of unpaid work).
Vertical Segregation	The concentration of women and men in different grades, levels of responsibility or positions (see Job Segregation).
Vocational Training	Any form of education which prepares for a particular profession, trade or employment or which provides the necessary skills for such a profession, trade or employment (European Court of Justice, Gravier Case 293/83 ECR 1985).

Table 4: FEMINIST VOCABULARY	
Affirmative Action	See positive Action
Domestic Violence/Family Violence	Any form of physical, sexual or psychological violence which puts the safety or welfare of a family member at risk and/or the use of physical or emotional force or threat of physical force, including sexual violence, within the family or household. Includes child abuse, incest, wife battering and sexual or other abuse of any member of the household.
Empowerment	The process of gaining access and developing one's capacities with a view to participating actively in shaping one's own life and that of one's community in economic, social and political terms.

Feminisation of Poverty	The increasing incidence and prevalence of poverty among women as compared to men.
Gender Based Violence/Sexual Violence	Any form of violence by the use or threat of physical or emotional force, including rape, wife battering, sexual harassment, incest and pedophilia.
Gender Contract	A set of implicit and explicit rules governing gender relations which allocate different work and value, responsibilities and obligations to men and women and is maintained on three levels – cultural superstructure – the norms and values of society; institutions – family welfare, education and employment systems, etc.; and socialization processes, notably in the family.
Gender Gap	The gap in any area between women and men in terms of their levels of participation, access, rights, remuneration and benefits.
Gender Relations	The relation and unequal power distribution between women and men which characterize any specific gender system (see gender contract).
Gender Roles	A set of prescriptions for action and behaviour allocated to women and men respectively, and inculcated and maintained as described under 'gender contract.'
Glass Ceiling	The invisible barrier arising from a complex set of structures in male dominated organizations which prevents women from accessing senior positions.
Human Rights of Women	The rights of women and the girl child as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights and including the concept of reproductive rights.
Invisible Barriers	Attitudes and their traditional assumptions, norms and values which prevent (women's) empowerment/full participation in society.
Quota	A defined proportion or share of places, seats or resources to be filled by proportional representation allocated to a specific group, generally under certain rules or criteria, and aimed at correcting a previous imbalance, usually in decision-making positions or in access to training opportunities or jobs.
Recognition and Valuation of Unpaid Work	Measurement, in quantitative terms, including by assessing and reflecting its value in satellite accounts, of remunerated work that is outside the scope of national accounts (UN system of national accounts) such as domestic work, caring for children and other dependants, preparing food for the family, community and other voluntary work.
Refuge	A safe place for women and children who are victims of violence in the home (shelter, crisis center).
Reproductive Rights	The right of an individual or couple to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health.
Satellite Account	An official account that is separate from but consistent with core national accounts
Sex	The biological characteristics which distinguish human beings as female or male.
Sex discrimination - direct	Where a person is treated less favourably because of his or her sex.
Sex discrimination - indirect	Where a law, regulation, policy or practice, apparently neutral, has a disproportionate adverse impact on the members of one sex, unless the difference of treatment can be justified by objective factors (Council Directive 76/207 of 09/02/76, OJ L 39).
Sex/gender system	A system of economic, social and political structures which sustain and reproduce distinctive gender roles and attributes of men and women (see Gender Contract).
Sex Trade	The trade in human beings, largely in women and children, for the purpose of sexual exploitation.
Sexual Harassment	Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or other conduct based on sex affecting the dignity of women and men at work including conduct of superiors and colleagues (Council Resolution 90/C 157/02 of 29/05/90, OJ C 157).
Sexual Violence	See gender and sexual violence

Time Use Survey	A measurement of the use of time by women and men, particularly in relation to paid and unpaid work, market and non market activities, leisure and personal time.
Trafficking/Trading in Human Beings/in Women and Children	The trade in people, primarily in women and children, for the purposes of modern slavery or cheap labour or for sexual exploitation (see Sex Trade).
Wife Battering/Beating	Violence against women by their partner (see also domestic violence)
Women's Studies/Gender Studies	An academic, usually interdisciplinary approach to the study of women's situation and gender relations as well as the gender dimension of all other disciplines.

Table 5: DEFINITIONS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING	
Gender Mainstreaming	The systematic integration of the respective situations, priorities and needs of women and men in all policies and with a view to promoting equality between women and men and mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality between women and men and mobilising all general policies and measures specifically for the purpose of achieving equality by actively and openly taking into account, at the planning stage, their effects on the respective situations of women and men in implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Commission Communication COM (96) 67 final of 21/02/96).
Integration of Equal Opportunities/Gender Perspective	See gender mainstreaming.
Mainstreaming	See gender mainstreaming.

Table 6: EURO-SPEAK	
Assisting Spouses	The spouses of people who are engaged in work usually of a self-employed or independent nature, where the spouse is an important contributor to the work but does not necessarily receive direct remuneration for this work and is often not entitled to social protection.
Burden of Proof	If a person files a legal complaint, it is in principle up to him or her to prove that she/he has been a victim of discrimination. In the area of equal treatment between men and women, a directive, based on the case law of European Court of Justice, shifts the burden of proof between the parties (defendant and complainant). Where persons consider themselves wronged by failure to apply the principle of equal treatment, and where there is a prima facie case of discrimination, it is for the respondent to prove that there has been no contravention of the principle (Judgement of 17.10.89 in Case C 109/88, Danfoss, [1989] ECR 3199, para 16: Council Directive of 15.12.97 on the burden of proof in cases of discrimination based on sex).
Democratic deficit	The impact of (eg) inadequate gender balance on the legitimacy of democracy.
Directives on Equal Treatment	Directives which extend the scope of the principle of equal treatment for men and women (which initially, in the Treaty of Rome, only concerned pay). The principle was extended to access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (Council Directive 76/207 of 09/02/76, OJ L 39), statutory social security schemes (Council Directive 79/7 of 19/12/78, OJ L 6), occupational social security schemes (Council Directive 86/378/EEC of 24/07/86, OJ L 225), to those engaged in activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity (Council Directive 86/613/EEC of 19/10/92, OJ L 348) and to those who are on parental leave (Council Directive 96/34/EEC of 19/06/96, OJ L 145).
Diversity	The differences in values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, skills, knowledge and life experiences of each individual in any group of people.
Family Violence	See Domestic Violence
Gender Equity	Fairness of treatment by gender, which may be equal treatment or treatment which is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.
Preferential Treatment	The treatment of one individual or group of individuals in a manner which is likely to lead to better benefits, access, rights and opportunities or status than those of another individual or group of individuals. May be used positively when it implies a positive action intended to eliminate previous discriminatory practice or negatively where it is intended to maintain differentials or advantages of one individual/group of individuals over another.
Sexual Orientation	Sexual preference for a person of either the same or the opposite sex (homosexuality, lesbianism, heterosexuality, bisexuality).

Source: Commission of the European Union (1998) *One Hundred Words for Equality: a glossary of terms on equality between women and men'* at http://www.eu.int

Appendix 2

Table 10: Investment in Equality Relative to Other Departments by Year 1993 – 2003

Department	1993 £000	1994 £000	1995 £000	1996 £000	1997 £000	1998 €000	1999 €000	2000 €000	2001 €000	2002 €000	2003 €000
Taoiseach	16,609	96,564	154,513	19,836	14,859	25,777	32,233	85,294	28,472	35,949	25,808
Justice (changed to Justice, Equality and Law Reform in 1997)	590,836	549,683	575,183	619,601	705,732	1,120,993	904,490	1,058,580	1,216,258	1,551,521	325,516
Equality and Law Reform	6,045	10,647	12,229	11,768	6,562	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Education (changed to Education and Science in 1997)	1,607,567	1,885,796	1,944,104	2,762,143	2,278,437	2,886,531	2,782,192	3,258,510	3,728,367	5,184,368	3,200,097
Enterprise and Employment (changed to Enterprise, Trade and Employment in 1997)	389,019	374,857	449,544	691,085	720,562	1,025,287	867,694	835,117	860,713	1,128,868	1,086,654
International Co-Operation	40,704	57,797	76,020	86,824	100,138	141,740	119,083	137,807	188,552	371,906	374,009
Social Welfare (changed to Social Community and Family Affairs in 1997)	2,121,516	2,108,880	2,473,931	2,606,555	2,721,069	3,547,077	2,829,689	2,877,363	3,280,868	5,098,566	5,612,889
Health (changed to Health and Children in 1997)	1,805,756	2,017,321	2,160,548	2,195,731	2,521,256	3,609,034	3,269,142	3,638,114	4,719,623	6,991,861	7,981,024
Total (including other services not listed here)	8,789,118	9,623,592	10,396,316	11,043,330	12,103,829	16,782,725	14,913,294	16,864,443	20,362,692	28,874,852	31,040,999

Source: 'Summary of Net Amounts (Non-capital and Capital) Appropriated by Dáil Éireann in 1994,1995,1996,1997,1998,1999,2000,2001,2002,2003' in Department of Finance *Revised Estimates for Public Services* (annual volumes 1994-2004) Dublin: Stationary Office.

Appendix 3

Table 16: Gender Impact Assessments – Responses

Measure*	Response	Female/Male Ratio (1999)	Differential Impact	Ways to Change factor impacts	Mainstreaming Actions
01. Action Programme for the Unemployed	Both male and female users of the facility	802/672 (FAS throughput)	There is evidence of significant levels of difference between the genders. There is some evidence that long term unemployed men are less likely to avail of training opportunities than women.	Men can be encouraged to avail of training.	Training options to be actively promoted amongst male EAP clients. Types of training provision to be maintained to ensure that they respond to the needs of both men and women.
02.ESF. National Employment Service	General public, unemployed, school-leavers, job changers, migrants and employers.	Not available	FAS is not aware of any significant differences between men and women in the utilisation of its National Employment Service.	No proposals	None proposed
03.ESF. Active measure for long-term unemployed and socially excluded	Women and men	29846/25817 (FAS throughput figures 1999)	More men than women are classified as long-term unemployed. Long-term unemployed men are less likely to avail of training opportunities than are women. Social exclusion affects women through long-term absence from the labour market. Childcare responsibilities can restrict women's availability for training.		

04. Early Education	Data on the current gender profile of the target group is not available	This is a new measure and there is no baseline data available.	The progress of the measure will be monitored closely after commencement with a view to evaluating the benefits derived from it and any gender differential in take up of the benefits or progress under them will be recorded as appropriate.	Nil at this point.	Nil at this point.

05ESF. School Completion Initiative	Pupils at risk of early school leaving and those who are already outside of the formal system.	Early School leavers' initiative 533/660 Stay in School Retention initiative (no data) (D/E&S Analysis)	8-15 year olds Early School Leavers Initiative A higher proportion of males have been targeted for intervention in recognition of the fact that more boys leave school early. Some of the participating schools are single-sex schools. Here interventions have been, where appropriate, gender specific. An integral element of this initiative has been to promote integrated activity where possible, primarily in an after-school context. At local level, particular activities may, at times, relate in the main to one sex (e.g. rugby, women's health, etc.) However, each consortium is committed to promoting gender balance both in the planning and implementation of activity. Experience has shown that, in the main, parental involvement is limited to that of the mother. Stay in School Retention Initiative No evaluation has been undertaken by the D/E&S on the possible reasons for the differences between males and females in terms of early school leaving (23.7% and 13.8% of the post-primary male and female cohort in 1997). Gender disaggregated data in accordance with the agreed indicators to show the progress of the measure will be collated.	8-15 year olds Early School Leavers Initiative That the consortia endeavour to maintain a gender balance when targeting pupils whilst always bearing in mind the specific criteria and needs of individual pupils. To initiate and develop supports which will encourage the involvement and participation of fathers in their children's education. To continue to develop integrated activities for both male and female participants. Stay in School Retention Initiative Any reasons for the gender differential gleaned from monitoring the effectiveness of the measure will be factored into amendments to the individual school plans. Research into the gender differential as regards early school leaving, could be one of the issues addressed by the Equality Unit, to be established in the D/E&S.	8-15 year olds Early School Leavers Initiative To continue to promote parental involvement as a core element of the initiative, both at consortium and activity level. Because the 8-15 Early School Leaver Initiative straddles both primary and post-primary schools, it is in an ideal position to develop understanding and respect between both genders. To continue to research/investigate the factors which contribute to early school leaving, including the preponderance of male over female Stay in School Retention Initiative Any reasons for the gender differential gleaned from monitoring the effectiveness of the measure will be factored into amendments to the individual school plans. Research into the gender differential as regards early school leaving, could be one of the issues addressed by the Equality Unit, to be established by the D/E&S.

06. Early Literacy	The focus of these initiatives, at all levels, encompasses both genders.	No data	In the case of each initiative, evaluations will be undertaken which will, inter alia, yield information on such gender differences that may exist, both at teacher and pupil level, in the context of participation in, and outcomes of, the various initiatives.	Consideration will be given to this issue in due course on foot of research findings/data.	As above
07. Traveller Education	Travellers enrolled in post-primary schools	60:40 (female:male) (Schools/VEC returns)	Traveller culture – there is a tradition of boys leaving school early and going to work in the family business at an early age, as well as a limited tradition of education in some Traveller families.	a) education provision will lead to greater participation and will improve the balance b) Visiting Teacher Service works to improve the level of participation and quality of education for Travellers. c) Education Welfare Act. Traveller and settled children will benefit from the protection of the Act. The Visiting Teachers will co-operate with the relevant authorities in the implementation of the Act.	a) Monitor actions already in place. b) Work by Visiting Teachers with schools and families.
08. School Guidance Service	Second level school pupils	c.50%/50 (D/E&S)	There is no significant gender differential.	There is no significant gender differential.	None proposed

09.ESF Third Level Access	Students with disabilities, students in financial hardship and 'second chance' students.	170(54%)/144(46%) for disabilities. No data for mature 'second chance' students and no data for those in financial hardship. (D/E&S data)	Students with disabilities In 1999, the gender breakdown of those were successful was in line with those who applied. In an event, there was a good gender balance among the beneficiaries of this fund. Mature 'second chance' students New area – no data. Students in financial hardship No data	It is anticipated that the Action Group on Access to Third Level Education will make recommendations in this regard.	

10. Schools Modern Languages	5th and 6th class pupils studying modern languages in primary schools. Post-primary students studying Italian	Primary: 10,352 girls, 9,216 boys studying modern languages in primary school. Post-primary: 9,874 girls, 6,464 boys studying Italian, Japanese and/or Spanish. (D/E&S)	Primary Strand – The pilot project will be taught in an equal manner to boys and girls. The performance of the pilot project will be monitored having particular regard to any gender differential in the take up and to the factors influencing any such gender differential. Post-primary strand – the principal factor is the availability of a subject within a school. If a subject is available in an all-girls school but not in an all-boys school then this clearly has a significant affect on the gender differential. There is also an issue of perception with girls being more likely to choose foreign languages than boys. The performance of the initiative will be monitored with regard to any differential in the take-up and to the factors influencing any such gender differential.	Primary Strand –Consideration will be given in due course to whether particular action is required to deal with any gender differential that may be identified. Post-primary Strand – In selecting new post-primary schools for the initiative the DES will try to ensure that the selected schools represent a cross section of the various school types that exist in Ireland. Therefore, account will be taken of school size, co-educational or single-sex schools, schools teaching through the medium of Irish, denominational, multi-denominational, urban/rural, socio-economic background. However an important element of the initiative is the support given to schools which already offer Italian, Spanish and/or Japanese – these schools will all receive some degree of support under the initiative.	None at this point but may be proposed later.

11A ESF Early School Leavers - Progression	No response	2,895/4,150 (FAS 1999 beneficiaries)	a) More young men than young women leave school early. b) A proportion of young women early school leavers become pregnant and as a result their participation in programmes is interrupted. c) ESLs often have limited career aspirations and do not take account of the full range of career opportunities available.	a) The measure cannot change the relatively high level of male early school leaving. This is a matter for the Education system for persons while still at school. However, the measure can attempt to take account of the different needs arising from this situation. b) Within CTWs a part-time option already exists – Gateway. c) Within other FAS training part-time courses are provided. d) FAS encourages lone parents to participate in training and provides part-time courses to facilitate participation. e) The availability of childcare would facilitate the retention of young lone parents in training. f) The Advocate programme assists ESLs to plan career paths with a focus on encouraging a full range of occupational choice.	a) Introduce a tracking system to keep in touch with young women who become pregnant, while on a FAS programme. b) Seek childcare funding for ESLs on FAS programmes c) Continue with existing measures as listed above.

11B ESF Early School Leavers – Youthreach and Travellers	No response	1282/1568 (ESRI survey school leavers)	The profile early school leavers nationally (ESRI survey) for those leaving school with no qualifications is 64% male and 36% female. Therefore females are over-represented in Travelling Training centres. Factors which impact on this are: A "pull" of greater proportion of males into unskilled work on leaving school (48% compared to 39% of females) leaving them unavailable for education/training. A perception among the Traveller community that male participation of over 18s in training is not appropriate and that they should be earning an income.	Part-time options for early school leavers, so they can combine family, work and education/training. Liaison with social welfare interests and with Traveller Organisations to seek to make programmes more attractive to over 18s.	Research on men and women's different learning styles. Specific programmes for disadvantaged males being developed in order to inform future practice. Referral network and Board of Management structure for Traveller Training centres, linking with Traveller organisations and other interests.
12A Sectoral Entry Training – Tourism School Leavers	School-leavers; Employees within the industry.	63%/37% (FAILTE IRELAND database)	Not applicable to these training measures		FAILTE IRELAND implements a policy to promote equality of access to all tourism training schemes. For example, all FAILTE IRELAND literature and application forms contain a positive statement on equal opportunity. Letters stressing equality of opportunity are included in career packages and forwarded to second-level students, FAS offices, Community Information Centres and public libraries.

12B Sectoral Entry Training – Tourism	Eligible are currently unemployed	55%/45% (FAILTE IRELAND)	Not applicable in terms of access to training and structure of courses (as evidenced by the male/female participation levels). However, women may be affected differentially in the workplace through a lack of flexible working conditions	Not applicable to training measures.	FAILTE IRELAND will continue to encourage employers to promote and implement more flexible employment practices in order to attract and retain more female participation in industry. This will be done through FAILTE IRELAND's HRM initiatives and meetings with industry representative bodies.
12C Sectoral Entry Training – Tourism (education)	School-leavers and others seeking higher level training and education in the catering/tourism area.	1702/764 (CERT)	The Tourism/Hospitality Industry traditionally has a higher participation rate amongst females.	To encourage more male students to pursue third level programmes in the Catering/Tourism area, through post-primary school guidance services.	As above.
12D Sectoral Entry Training – Agriculture	School-leavers; Rural women (mostly those on farms).	1,151/3,976 (Teagasc databank)	In relation to school leavers, the main factor is traditional farm inheritance patterns. In relation to rural women, the main factors are course content and traditional roles of men and women on farms. Timing of course delivery is relevant in some situations.	In relation to school leavers; promotion of courses suitable for women; Give career guidance talks to all secondary schools Provide courses for rural women related to their expressed needs; Consult with women's groups regarding timing of courses.	Continue with actions as outlined above.
13ESF Skills Training for Unemployed & Redundant	Women and Men	7,925/5,748 (FAS throughput data)	More women than men participate overall in the programme within this measure and within each training programme.	Promote skills training and other forms of training amongst men.	Undertake promotional campaign. Review training provision to ensure that it meets the needs of both men and women.

Apprenticeships/traineeships - FAS	Apprentices	446/490 Traineeships 127/20,877 Apprenticeships FAS database	Apprenticeships: 1.Women traditionally have been under-represented I apprenticeship training. 2. Social and cultural factors influence women's reluctance to undertake non-traditional training. 3. Employers recruit apprentices directly. There are no significant gender differences evident in traineeships.	In apprenticeships: a) the recruitment of women by employers b) providing introductory training for women to sample craft skills c) By undertaking promotional campaigns aimed at young women. Current traineeships situation is satisfactory and requires no special attention.	In apprenticeships: a) Develop social partners promotional/recruitment initiatives. b) Provide preparatory training for women. c) Continue bursary scheme d) Establish a mentoring scheme e) Panel of registered women apprentices and crafts-persons to give talks to schools. f) Develop a special initiative with selected employers to provide in-company bridging programme for apprenticeship entry.
14B Apprenticeship - Education	Number of registered apprenticeships participating on Phases 4 and 6 of the apprenticeship programme in the Technological Sector	90/5,799 D/E&S	See Measure 14A of Programme Complement	See Measure 14A of Programme Complement	See Measure 14A of Programme Complement

15. Employment Support Services	Long-term unemployed, lone parents, certain disabled	BTWAS – 6,195/32,970 BTEAS – 2,370/3,018 (D/SCFA)	D/SCFA BTWAS – Lower numbers of women in main target group i.e. Long Term Unemployed and Lone Parents (mostly women) not availing of scheme due possibly to childcare. BTEAS – Lower number of women in main target group. i.e. long-term unemployed. Only 36% of the long-term unemployed on the Live Register are women and lone parents who are predominantly, women are not availing of the scheme due possibly to childcare problems.	BTWAS – By providing better/more affordable childcare facilities; however only limited change is possible – scheme is equally available to both men and women and is demand driven. BTEAS – providing better/more affordable childcare facilities – if this is the deterrent to participation.	D/SCFA will liaise with other Departments and agencies responsible for providing childcare where it is a deterrent to a person taking up work or (BTEAS) who may want to take part in the scheme.
16. Vocational Training & Pathways to Employment for People with Disabilities	Persons with disabilities	1295/1831 (National Rehab Board)	Traditionally young women and girls with disabilities are reluctant to enter the labour force or attend vocational training programmes as a vehicle to such entry. (Parents/guardians often did not believe this to be an appropriate, safe, environment).	Changes in these attitudes will be slowly achieved thanks to suitable guidance as well as legal and other safeguards on the treatment of young women.	None proposed at this time.

17. Refugee Language Support Unit	Refugees of school-going age, experiencing language difficulties, which may hinder their participation in and benefit from the education system and refugees, other than the school-going age cohort, experiencing language difficulties, which may hinder access and particpation in training programmes and taking up employment/living independently.	Estimated 20%/80%	Although no research has been undertaken to date by the RLSU, in this regard, it is considered that the following factors impact on the differential impact on women: Cultural, ethnic and religious. Childcare, and Absence of wider family support	Cultural, ethnic and religious differences among refugees are likely to prove very difficult to influence, no least because of the language difference. Consideration will be given to mounting an awareness campaign among female adult refugees of the benefits of language training and education. The RLSU has begun to organise classes on a part-time basis to facilitate mothers, whose children may be at school. Consideration will be given to other flexible forms of delivery.	No proposals at this point.
18A ESF In-Company Training-FAS	Companies and other employees	34%/65% (Old TSS, Scheme as operated in 1999)	a) There are more men than women at work. b) There are relatively more men than women at higher occupational levels in industry and service. A greater proportion of higher occupation employees receive training than lower occupation employees.	a) FAS encourages companies to train women in the Training Support Scheme publicity and brochures. b) As women take up a greater proportion of jobs during the coming years, and as they move up the occupational ladder, the current differentiation is likely to be reduced.	a) Continue to promote the training of women by companies in FAS – funded training schemes. b) Within the context of life-long learning FAS will take special initiatives to promote female training and re-training.

18B ESF In-Company Training-Enterprise Ireland	Companies	N/A	More men than women tend to be involved in management and starting company, therefore a greater number of men to benefit from management training.	Specific positive action initiatives designed to encourage the participation of women will be introduced as special elements within the measure.	a) Dedicated networks for women in business b) Specific management training for women.
19A ESF Social Economy Programme	No current measures	Nil/Nil	Not known at this stage	The programme documentation and procedures have been 'equality proofed' by the Dept of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	FAS will monitor participation of men and women on the programme at all levels to ensure that an appropriate gender balance is achieved.
19B ESF Social Economy – Local Social Capital	No current measures	Nil/Nil	Not known at this stage	The programme documentation and procedures will be 'equality proofed' by the Dept of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	Any required will be proposed after initial experience of sub-measure implementation.

21ESF Lifelong Learning – Back to Education Initiative	Adults with low education and skill levels – employed or not in the labour market.	Part-time options – no data. Full-time 63% (19,554)/8,833 (Estimated VEC returns)	(Estimated VEC Returns) The expectations are that the following will arise: a) Difficulty attracting male adults in learning. b) Sex stereotyping of subject choice in school influencing subject areas participants choose in further education (under representation of both sexes in non-traditional options) c) Evidence of lower earning levels for women d) Barriers to access for women in relation to family responsibilities, lack of flexibility in provision and childcare.	Encouragement of non-traditional choices as interests and prior education allow access to childcare supports via existing VTOS/Youthreach measure and D/JELR Childcare Programme Flexible timing and delivery of programme Specific programmes targeted at males. Better links with employers and community groups.	Research being commissioned on men and women's different learning styles in order to inform practice. White paper on Adult education proposes coordination structures at national and local level, which will improve links with other interests and with community education providers. In-service programme on equality issues. Development of supporting services. New approaches to flexibility.
22ESF Lifelong Learning – National Adult Literacy Strategy	Adults with inadequate literacy and numeracy skills	7,300/2,700 (VEC returns)	Women more likely to seek help in order to support their children's learning and counter exclusion Literacy problems in work currently being targeted. Absence of training allowances for participants.	Themed literacy to attract males (eg. Literacy through IT, photography etc.) Better links with community education providers, employers. Targeted initiatives in workplace. TV and radio options to reach into homes. Contributions of literacy with other schemes (e.g. FAS) which pay allowances.	As Above

23. Lifelong Learning – Further Education Support Services	Early School Leavers and adults on further education programmes	63%/37% (estimated) (VEC data)	It is expected to mirror take-up on further education programmes. Men and women will be targeted equally. A differential is not expected in those who access assistance under the guidance service.	See above	See above.
24B Ongoing Sectoral Training - Seafood	Catching sector	Catching sector is almost 100% male (BIM data)	Caring responsibilities (primary childcare). Issues relating to provision (primarily costs, training inflexibility, transportation and awareness). Attitudinal issues in Women (eg. Lack of confidence and role models). Attitudinal issues in Others (Ages, attitudes of employers) and conditions of work.		BIM will continue with the following measures: Promotion of the development of career-training paths remunerated in accordance with qualifications gained in the catching, aquaculture, processing, distribution and retail sectors. Introduction of modular, more flexible training to attract new entrants and workers in the existing workforce. Awareness creating promotional activities to attract new entrants to the industry.

24D Ongoing Sectoral Training – Equine Institute	School Leavers, adults remaining to study (Professional Development), Adults (additional qualifications), Adults (change of career – new qualification) Employees of Horse Industry & Farmers	165/110 (Equine Institute, UL)	Lack of qualification in Equine Science in the past. Previously, this was a male dominated employment area. Return to study by females when family reared. Economic factors, more women entering Equine work force and requiring qualifications.	a) Flexibility through use of a variety of 1. Delivery modes. 2. Delivery locations and times. 3. Registration times (possible to undertake programmes twice per year). b) Innovative Assessment modes. c) Open access (no formal access qualifications for mature students). d) Exemption based on prior work experience and prior learning.	a) Continue with actions as outlined above. b) Actively develop web based/electronic delivery systems. c) Improve learning support mechanism.
24E. Ongoing Sectoral Training – Agriculture	School Leavers & Rural Women	1,151/3,976 (Teagasc)	a) In relation to school leavers, the main factor is traditional farm inheritance. b) In relation to rural women, the main factors are course content and traditional roles of men and women on farms. Timing of course delivery is relevant in some situations.	a)For school leavers; promotion of courses as being suitable for women; b) give career guidance talks to all secondary schools c) For rural women, provide special courses relating to expressed needs. d) consult with women's groups regarding timing of courses.	Continue with actions as outlined above.

24F. Ongoing Sectoral Training - Tourism	Industry Employees & Entrepreneurs	57%/43% (FAILTE IRELAND)	Not applicable in terms of access to training programmes. However, women may be affected differentially in the workplace through the lack of flexible working conditions.	Not applicable to the training environment.	FAILTE IRELAND will continue to promote the need for equality of access to employment and the need for flexible working conditions in order to attract and retain staff. This will be done through regular meetings with industry representative bodies also through the Human Rescource Management initiatives which will be developed throughout the lifetime of this OP.
24G. Ongoing Sectoral Training – Tourism Education	Existing tourism/hospitality industry staff in education to enhance prospects and meet demand	437/330 (CERT Annual Report 1999)	The Tourism/Hospitality Industry traditionally has a higher participation rate among females. All Institute of Technology programmes are open to both male and female candidates. Male under-representation is complicated by issues such as socio-historical, personal and other socio-economic factors.	To encourage more industry employees to pursue third level training in the tourism/hospitality area through the promotion of continuing education programmes. To extend the range of courses currently available in the continuing education programme. To ensure that course delivery takes into account elements of flexibility, to enable maximum participation of applicants.	To encourage more industry employees to participate on continuing education programmes. To ensure that course delivery and planning takes elements of flexibility into account to ensure maximum levels of participation by applicants.
25. Middle-level technician/Higher Level Technical & Business Skills	School-leavers and other requiring middle/high technical business skills	14,302/16,818 (D/ES Final ESF Claim)	Subject preferences of the individual student at post-primary level. Limited availability of subject syllabus of a technical or scientific nature in some all-girls post primary schools.	More female post-primary students could be encouraged to pursue third-level courses in the MLT/HTBS programmes, through the post-primary school guidance service.	To encourage more female students to pursue third level programmes in the MLT/HTBS area, through post-primary school guidance service.

26. ESF Undergrad Skills	School leavers, mature students and industry operatives	Universities 669/1,561 (HEA) Technological Sector 335/1,061 (HEA)	Lower up-take of science subjects at second-level by females.	Research is being undertaken by the ESRI into the processes shaping choices regarding scientific subjects at senior cycle in second level and in third level entry.	The results of the above research will be considered in the context of informing future policy directions.
27. Postgraduate Conversion Courses	Course participants	580/761 (HEA)	The male participants at 57% v. females at 43% reflects the general higher participation rate of male students pursuing ICT courses. In this regard, the gender balance of under-graduate students pursuing IT and Computing courses in HEA institutions is 70% males and 30% females.	The gender breakdown of students on the Post-graduate conversion programme is now more balanced than the breakdown of undergraduate students pursuing IT and Computing courses in HEA institutions. However, the under representation of female students in some sectors of study (including IT and Computing), is one of the issues into which the Equality Unit, to be established in the D/E&S, could commission research.	As above.
28A. Training of Trainers – Primary, post-primary & further education	Teachers and parents	85,863/35,616 (i.e. aggregate course participants as opposed to individual teachers participating in programme) (D/ES ESF Final Claim 1999)	The timing of In-career development courses. More women than men in the teaching profession (particularly at primary level) Different subject areas taught – men more involved in science and technological subjects. Apparent reluctance of men to become involved in curriculum areas which deal with the social and personal development of pupils. Childcare arrangements Location of courses.	Hold courses to dovetail with participants; childcare arrangements. Create awareness amongst women of the need to enhance their skills particularly in the area of women interested in becoming Principals (there is a disproportionate number of men holding Principalships). Collect relevant data through the research reports. Eg. Identifying issues associated with the participation of men in social personal and health education (SPHE) type programmes.	Ensure availability of targeted management development programmes for women who are Principals or who aspire to management positions. Act on outcomes of research report.

28B. Training of Trainers – FAS	FAS trainers	116/549 (FAS Records)	a) FAS has traditionally provided most its training courses in areas of industrial skills. In particular, a significant proportion of FAS trainers are in apprenticeship areas. Most qualified as crafts-persons are male. b) Within the cohort of FAS trainers take-up of training by men and women is equitable.	a) FAS operates a policy of equal opportunity in recruitment. b) FAS training of trainer programmes are operated in a flexible manner, many involving open learning methods, so as to be open to all relevant instructor staff.	No specific actions required.

29A. Quality Assurance (including training of trainers)	Students and academic staff of universities and Institutes of technology	Technological sector – 714/1,125 Universities – 752/834 (1999 ESF Final Claim)	With regard to the Training of Trainers programme in the Technological Sector: - Flexibility of scheduling of courses and content can effect the profile of participants on training courses. - subject preferences of the individual student at post-primary level and the limited availability of subjects of a scientific/technical nature in some all-girls schools, can impact on the choices of courses at third-level and ultimately the availability of women to apply for lecturing positions in third-level institutions. Universities: - The gender profile in the University sector is more evenly split than in the Technological sector. In assessing proposals for courses under the Training of Trainers programme, the effect on the gender profile is one consideration taken in account before funding is provided.	With regard to the Training of Trainers programme: - the establishment of a dedicated Equality Unit with the D/E&S, to co-ordinate and monitor the process of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all areas of the educational system. Research will be undertaken as to the reasons for the under-participation of both genders in various programmes in the education system, which will subsequently inform the mainstreaming process. - More women could be encouraged to teach classes/courses in the Technological Sector, taught traditionally by males. This could be achieved initially at post-primary level by encouraging more women to pursue the post-primary school guidance service.	Senior management should be encouraged to motivate staff to participate on training and staff development programmes. Flexibility regarding the scheduling of courses should be encouraged to maximise participation rates by staff.
29B ESF Quality Assurance/ Certification & National Qualifications Framework	Students/trainees, pursuing courses/ programmes covered by the measure	Figures currently being obtained (1999 awards by certification bodies)	Both genders will benefit from this measure; the gender breakdown of those receiving certification under this measure will depend on the gender breakdown of those who successfully complete the course/programme.	See above	See above

30 ESF Educational Equality	Disadvantaged adult women and men	Women's groups – 100%; Other groups, new initiative therefore no data, gender breakdown estimated 50%/50% (D/E&S from project providers)	No gender differential as this measure has been for women only and was aimed at progressing models which impacted on systemic change to better meet the needs of specific groups.	Existing Measure: Key issues identified under Women's Education Initiative are Flexibility of timing of provision, dialogue with learners and willingness to adapt. Appropriate modes of certification and assessment. Adequate supports, mentoring, childcare, guidance etc. continuous feedback and affirmation. New Elements New measure for disadvantaged adults in order to progress models which impact on systemic change to better meet the needs of specific groups. Its progress will be monitored with a view to recording any gender differentials in take-up and identifying the factors leading to any such gender differentials. Analysis of the issues for disadvantaged men is expected to be similar, insofar as flexibility and supports are concerned, but will also relate to issues of targeting and subject content and men and women's different learning styles. The initiative will highlight the key lessons in this area as projects evolve.	a) The issues above are all being pursued through the White Paper: Learning for Life. b) Experience of initiative to inform mainstream practice.
31A ESF Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring - Education	New area of activity	See below	See below	See below	Purpose is to monitor the process of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all areas of the educational system.

31B Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring - NDP	New area of activity	New measure (not applicable).	a) Invisibility of gender issues within other grounds. b) The experience of simultaneous inequalities is not explored or addressed. c) lack of knowledge about experiences specific to women and men under the various inequality grounds.	a) specific account will be taken of gender specification within each research report. b) data deficits explored under all grounds will include a focus on gender breakdown under each ground. c) Indicators explored in relation to each ground will include a focus on gender d) a specific focus on simultaneous inequalities will be developed.	Approach required will be advised on a case by case basis.
32A Education Infrastructure	Primary/post-primary pupils, third level students and participants on further and adult education programmes, teachers and other users of educational institutions	Primary – Pupils 51%/49% & Teachers 79%/21%. Post-primary – pupils 50%/50% Further education trainees – 67%/33% Education Centre trainees – 66%/34% Third level full-time students – 53%/47%. (D/ES 1998/99 Annual statistical report; DES post-primary pupils database; ESF Final Claims)	DES policy is to ensure that all new buildings are designed to allow access for both genders – there are guidelines in relations to the provision of sanitary facilities for pupils/trainees/students and staff. Access to third level is determined by academic achievement.	As above.	As above.
32B Training Infrastructure	-	Not applicable	-	-	A mainstreaming strategy is not directly applicable in this sub-measure.

33A Technical Assistance – Equality Studies	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	See Below	The core function of the unit is research	Not applicable.
33B OP Technical Assistance	Same under 1994/99 OP	No gender-differentiated data available.	Supports eligible administrative needs & requirements for OP implementation; no direct gender issues	Actions to implement govt and NDP gender-balanced approach and measures.	On-going effort to encourage substantive measures to respond as positively as possible.

Appendix 4

Sample Interview Questions

1. In your experience, have the basic premises on which gender equality policy-making is based changed since Ireland signed up to the Platform for Action in 1995?
2. How does the introduction of equality legislation work to achieve gender equality?
3. What are the main policy leaders(i.e. the EU, UN, national level initiatives) setting the agenda for gender equality policy in Ireland?
4. What would you say are the priority changes that must be made to achieve gender equality in Ireland?
5. Is it possible to differentiate between national and international gender equality policy initiatives?
6. How does gender mainstreaming differ from other types of policy-making?
7. Where do you think the core values behind the mainstreaming project come from?
8. Do you think that mainstreaming is a new way of approaching policy-making or is it similar to established policy-making procedure? How does it differ from previous gender equality policy-making?
9. What do you think are the major difficulties in implementing gender equality policy?
10. In your experience, what do you think are the most promising developments with regard to gender equality policy-making since the publication of the Second Commission on the Status of Women?

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Project Summary

Gender Mainstreaming: A Study of Norm Change in the Irish Civil Service

This thesis sets out to examine 'gender mainstreaming' as a scheme for the promotion of gender interests in mainstream policy-making. The thesis identifies gender mainstreaming as a development for feminist theory and practice. Specifically, it argues that 'gender mainstreaming' is a practical implication of feminist activity, with roots in feminist theory.

The thesis argues that international organisations and institutions, primarily the UN and EU, through the work of governments and NGOs at the international level, have created international norms of gender equality.[1] International conferences and subsequent agreements, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, change the agenda of gender equality policy-making at national level. The impact of international gender norms at national level is examined through an analysis of state-level activity before and after the introduction of international standards of gender equality.

The methodology employed is effectively a case study approach. The project analyses the introduction and implementation of 'gender mainstreaming' in the Republic of Ireland as one case of a globally proliferating policy. As such, the role of policy-makers and NGO representatives in the institutionalisation of international gender norms at state-level is considered.

The thesis essentially comprises four parts. The first section outlines the relevance of current debates in feminist theory to questions surrounding the meaning and significance of gender mainstreaming. Part One, therefore, critiques and evaluates current thinking on 'gender mainstreaming' and relates it to broader feminist arguments concerning language and marginality. The main goal is to establish a meaningful theory of gender mainstreaming. Section Two sets the context for the study in terms of Ireland as a significant case of the global policy of 'gender mainstreaming.' Part Three details the adoption and implementation of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland. This section assesses whether the introduction of international norms of gender equality has led to a change in norms of gender equality at national level. The fourth section, containing the final chapter, concludes the thesis.

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[1] General societal behaviour is shaped by collectively held norms (Finnemore, 1996 ; 23). In fact, many norms are so institutionalised and taken for granted that they are rarely violated and may even be difficult to recognise (for instance, the norm that economic growth is good) (Finnemore, 1996 ; 23). However, norms can be identified in the discourse of actors as long as they are subject to discussion. Gender issues are by definition subject to discussion as part of the implementation of 'gender mainstreaming'. In essence, this means that topics previously taken for granted and not subject to discussion are now being discussed. My research wishes to investigate whether the discourse (the way people talk about something or the words they use) around gender in the Irish civil service exhibits any evidence that 'gender' norms are changing with the implementation of 'gender mainstreaming'.

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Appendix 5

July 2nd 2002.

RE: GENDER MAINSTREAMING RESEARCH

Dear ,

Firstly, let me introduce myself as one of the authors of the report entitled *The Development of Mechanisms to Monitor Progress in Achieving Gender Equality in Ireland* (2000), which is now a basis for the *Draft National Plan for Women*. I have since embarked on a PhD dissertation, of which the transition from a legislative to a mainstreaming equality agenda in the Republic of Ireland is a central theme. My project was awarded a full scholarship from the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (www.irchss.ie) and builds on the work we conducted for the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform in 1999-2000. A project description is attached.

I have spoken to at the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and she suggested that your knowledge and experience as a policy-maker would make you a valuable contributor to my project. As such, I request an hour of your time at some stage before September 30, 2002, in order to ask you some simple questions about your general views on the mainstreaming project. Some sample interview questions are attached.

Please be assured that interview respondents will not be identified by name in any publication. This study is purely of academic interest

Yours sincerely,

_____

Gemma Carney

Room 4.09, No. 1 College Green, Dublin 2, Ireland

Appendix 6

H1: that the introduction of gender mainstreaming in the Republic of Ireland is the result of a combination of leadership by international actors and collaboration of national-level policy-makers who promote international norms at domestic level.

UN World Conferences on Women

There is a reluctance to have another international conference because the last time so much time was spent just trying to safeguard advances that had been made already against the fundamentalist right. WID Europe publication made a proposal for another world conference in 2005. Seen as a rowing back of what we already have – a rearguard action (R14, Q8, p. 4).

The National Plan for Women (2002)

The first task was to get the government to agree. The first thing we did was launch the Draft National Plan for Women – this provided a basis for the consultation process. We provided €250,000 in a large number of small grants to help groups put together their submissions (R23, Q5, p. 2).

This Plan is much wider than GM. GM is part of the plan not the other way round. The National Plan for Women will become the National Women's Strategy and this contains GM and the Equality for Women Measure and Equality Legislation and lots of other things. I suppose it represents a national policy on gender equality (R23, Q12, p. 7).

This actually recognises that there are differences between women and men and that women should be equal instead of trying to squeeze it into a box called equality. It is not just making women like men. It is more than that. Women have different needs – there should be some academic who explains that. (R23, Q13, p. 4).

Men have needs too – any human being does. They have to fight the traffic jams and bite the bullet at work. I suppose I am talking about family friendly policy and the idea of working from home – everyone should be able to do that. It is a plan for women's quality of life not just equality (R23, Q14, p.4).

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

... because of resource constraints our work has to be disjointed... a belt and braces approach. We cover gender mainstreaming and the UN commitments separately. My job is essentially to work on the international aspects of issues relating to women not just GM. It is better to have co-ordination rather than letting 12 different departments deal with 12 separate critical areas of concern. You can't have 12 people going to the Beijing conference (R23, Q8, p. 3).

Role of the UN

Well, the concept of gender mainstreaming originated at the Beijing conference. I suppose it was probably around before then, but it was formalised and adopted at that time. There was some opposition to it at the beginning because it was seen by some as a way of burying the idea (R4, Q2, p. 1).

I would say that definitely the NDP via Europe is the strongest. At the Beijing+5 conference the Minister, it was John O'Donoghue at the time, signed up to CEDAW

and to other things. The thing about international organisations is that they ask questions which are not binding but it can embarrass a government into acting. You can be called to an oral hearing at CEDAW...But then they can ask you questions about anything afterwards – not always related to the report you presented. Then you are on your own. Often they are looking for the gaps and will pick you up on a problem. So that's the international; it's not legally binding but you could say that it is morally binding. (R4, Q7, p. 3).

Otherwise, why would the minister have signed up to these things. I would say that it is the only reason why we have the National Plan for Women. I wouldn't say the only reason but certainly it started happening when we came back from New York and it should have been done after Beijing not Beijing+5. I would say that they have a watchdog or monitoring role. Now the report has gone to the next stage and because we have a new government a memo will be sent to government to have it put through. (R4, Q8, p. 3).

GC: *You say that most of the equality initiatives come from the EU. How about the UN, does that have any impact?*
RES: No, no, not the UN, that's a different thing altogether. The initiatives come from the NDP and the previous programme for government.(R2, Q 14, p. 3).

Before Beijing gender was seen as a HR issue. Now the requirement is wider. (R10, Q19, p. 7).

To jump from aid to national policy without pilots is too big and that's why we are having these problems. But the UN decided to run with it and deal with consequences afterwards (R10, Q20, p. 7).

What drove that was a combination of the national and international and its hard to separate those. But the UN reporting requirements did mean that somebody had to work on it and meetings had to be made about it.(R10, Q6, p. 3).

We'd look and see what's the best way to do it and respond in due course – maybe 5 years later – thinking post boom for Beijing +5. Most things are incremental, you can't change the system (R10, Q8, p. 4).

My understanding is that when the big world conferences on women, like Beijing, take place they introduce a need to share practice and ideas. It means that if you want equality between men and women you have to make interventions to make sure that as well as equality of access there is equality of outcome. There is a huge misunderstanding about what gender mainstreaming is about. The problem with those implementing it is that they don't have the political, cultural sociological, whatever you want to call it, understanding of the process and what it means. (R22, Q3, p. 2).

My understanding would be that the idea came from Beijing and that it basically is a policy to look at all policies and their impacts. At the EU level there are a number of pieces of work that were done in Sweden and Denmark first that showed ways of gender proofing policy. This showed that when you proofed and tried to make interventions and outcome happen and the will of the people working on it was there you could make changes. The Equality Unit at the European Commission did that research and the whole EU took on a gender mainstreaming policy on that basis (R22, Q3, p. 2).

The wider developments like the Beijing conference wouldn't impact on me but I am sure that they have an influence at some level (R21, Q8, p. 4).

I suppose Beijing gave it a focus – Beijing was a big political statement but was followed in different ways. It focussed the women's lobby and was active in parliament.(R15, Q6, p. 2).

The UN gave a platform for the NGOs and a political standing. It made the politicians more interested in it. The Minister would have some initiative because the papers were covering it. A lot of the time journalists don't see what we are doing as news. If you want to get something in the papers it's hard. The UN gave the media a story and a public focus – it put us centre stage. People around the country became more active as well because there was more publicity. (R15, Q13, p. 4).

I was at the UN for the 2000 review... It was very hard to get any agreement... The balance was different in 2000 from 1995 – we were short changed – huge population only had one voice. The EU has one voice now. (R15, Q14-15, p. 4).

Big achievement in 1996 is that it made the departments more active. They felt they had to do something to make Ireland look well. It also gave some women's groups an excuse to meet Ministers. It opened doors for people. (R15, Q16, p. 5).

It was useful to do it in the form of a report to the UN because it shows the UN what we are doing. This is what we have been doing and so far haven't had any complaints from the UN... We can also attach it to the CEDAW report to demonstrate our commitment (R23, Q6, p. 2).

I think they all played a part but if you asked me to pick one I would have to say the UN through the Beijing Platform for Action was the most important. This is influential because it looks good internationally and it reflects well on Ireland... We want to look good internationally and that applies to all international agreements not just gender (R23, Q7, p. 2).

I don't think Beijing has had an influence. It didn't have the force of a convention and is not binding on member states. Its value lies in naming and shaming at the Beijing +5 conference and pushing for National Plan for Women. That is very weak. It is very much a mixture of existing commitments. It is not a new strategic approach – it is strong on employment because that has always been a priority of the EU. There is a commitment to have 60% of females in the workforce by 2010. The strongest measures are on training, education, labour force participation but the difficulty is then that there are areas that are phenomenally weak... It can facilitate but shouldn't be just a re-hash of existing commitments. Beijing is not binding (R14, Q7, p. 4).

The Role of the European Union

It was joining the EU and opening ourselves out to Europe (R24, Q5, p. 2).

I was involved at the time when we fought for equal opportunities to get the same pay and to be able to be equal with men and so I am less hung up on gender mainstreaming (R24, Q6, p. 2).

In Ireland, equality legislation was the first thing that happened. The EU was the greatest influence, is my strong view. It happened as a labour market thing,

employment equality was the real driver and the law spread from that into other areas. There is no doubt that labour market pressures have been a factor in recent years as employers have started to compete for labour. And also I think the general modernisation of Irish society and the labour market (R9, Q10, p. 6).

...the European Working Party for Gender Equality in Education. People thought that it would take money from other projects, namely positive action. The problem is that it is easy to say that you are mainstreaming but very difficult to prove that it is actually being done. At the time we felt that more positive action was needed. But then after Beijing it became the strategy of the EU – it was probably brought up by the EU at Beijing was probably around the EU first. The big difference now though is that it is mandatory now. Before that we were also out on a limb. Gender equality was always pushed out to the side. Now its part of regulations for the structural funds. Governments can't get out of it now. If they don't do it they will be pursued by the EU (R4, Q3, p. 1).

GM is going to take a long time. If there is continued commitment in the EU this will speed it up, as opposed to just having a department for equality. The EU is pivotal as it keeps it at the centre but there is always something that pushes gender into the margins (R4, Q15, p. 5).

In the NDP there are four horizontal issues, and the Commission have two – the environment and gender. The Commission will probably press people on those in the future. Obviously finance don't want it because they don't want anything but money concerns and financial targets. But they have allowed this system to happen (R6, Q19, p. 5).

...the EU was feeling usurped by the UN at Beijing. The agreements signed then were running ahead of the EU and they sort of adopted gender mainstreaming then as their thing (R5, Q6, p. 2).

EU people were continually criticising us on not developing gender mainstreaming (R2, Q19, p. 4).

As far as I am concerned it was EU driven. Once we joined the EU, you see, we had to stop things we had been doing.For instance, equal pay came in and we had to lift the marriage bar (R2, Q2, p. 2).

In the EU it was a woman called Lisa Paven-Wolfe; she's DG of Employment now. I think (names policy-maker) was there too but (names policy-maker) and I definitely took Mary Wallace to the EU because we wanted to find out how they had got mainstreaming in there. I think it was really down to Nell Van Dyck, a Dutch MP in the Commission who was so disgusted that P. Flynn was given responsibility for Equality that she kicked up a fuss with the Commission President. I think it was Delores at the time and he made a promise to set up a sub-group on gender equality in the Commission. The woman who told us all this, I can't remember her name now but she was a DG. I am sure that we have notes on file about this – (names policy-maker) would probably know about it. I am not sure if she was there or not but I think that it was around the time that she joined the Department. Anyway, the reason that she managed to bring in this thing (mainstreaming) was because Delores was behind it (R2, Q16, p. 3).

Gender mainstreaming is integral to what we do – I've been working on the ESF since 1998 – which was the end of the last round of structural funds. I would have contributed to the compilation of the NDP, the CSF and seen the evolution of ideas to completion of the final documents and plans. The Commission has put a strong focus on gender equality. Europe first declared employment to be a matter of common concern around Amsterdam Treaty which I think was about 1998. I suppose with the publication of the Delors White Paper called 'Growth, competitiveness and Employment' which was published in 1993. Having completed the single market the thinking was that now Europe was competing with Japan and the US. In terms of competition Europe really compared itself with the US where there was no barrier to movement of people and capital between States. In Europe we still had major problems regarding economic growth without increasing employment. So for the last NDP – one that finished in 1999, so 1994-1999, the opening line was that it was a plan for Employment (R7, Q3, p. 2).

The big shift was in the Commission's rules in the most recent action plan. In a document called 'Structural Actions 2000-2006' (1999) regulation no. 1260, one of the key objectives of the plan is stated as being 'the promotion of equality between men and women.'... it's very different to mobilise the labour supply. It was identified that women returners were needed. A document you should look at is the 'European Employment Action Plan' (R7, Q8, p. 3).

No doubt the EU is the most powerful action. Basically because there was money around, (names senior policy-maker) addressed every forum she could to get funding. In the last round of funding there was an under-spend somewhere. There was money available for childcare and this was pushed by the EU Commission because gender equality was a key objective in the Structural Funds documents. The Commission were pushing and looking for evidence of positive action and gender mainstreaming before there was any sign of gender mainstreaming happening (R7, Q10, p. 3).

Well Europe is definitely the biggest influence (R16, Q16, p. 4).
GC: That seems to be the consensus.
R16: That's because of all the seminars we went to in the beginning. All the books we got were from Europe said that gender mainstreaming meant gender concerns should be at the centre of decision-making. Then the whole idea of proofing should be a tool for mainstreaming gender concerns. But it is very difficult. How can you gender proof a road? I remember trying to do a gender perspective on something like that and having only two things to go on. First my instinct that it was easier to travel as a single bloke than as a woman with children. But then there was no statistical information to hang this instinct on (R16, Q19, p. 5).

One of the reasons was political pressure from Europe. The changes in the regulation of the structural funds have mainstreamed equality. There was political pressure from the Commission, which means these issues have to be dealt with in a much more significant way (R21, Q7, p. 3).

It is achieving progress. It will keep achieving progress. Maybe slower than people anticipated because it involves structural change but it's a good long-term plan. It is important that it is an EU priority... I would feel that gender mainstreaming stemmed from labour market pressures in the EU. There is an ageing population and serious labour gaps. In 1990 it was seen that we needed to do something to incorporate women as economic participants in the economy. It resulted in a transition from carers to workers and this, crudely speaking, means that your voice means more. It is very different in the feminist community (R14, Q18, p. 8)

The EU is the most important. It wouldn't have happened without the EU. The Commission follows up and criticizes departments and wants to see improvements by pushing departments and linking it to funding body puts GM on the agenda (R14, Q6, p. 3).

The NWCI is linked into gender mainstreaming as technical support in the NOW programme... the programme ended because the EU felt the policy lessons from pilot positive action measures to be mainstreamed. We would have argued that gender mainstreaming never happens completely. A lot of groups – say the Longford women returners committee – are training women returners and there is still no replacement funding going to a range of funders. The downside of gender mainstreaming is that it needs to be implemented in comprehensive/maximalist way. The trend with this government is to replace supports with gender mainstreaming – positive actions are still needed in the Irish context (R14, Q2, p. 1).

I don't have much dealing with the next level – the EU. Sometimes I think that the EU has done the least amount of work but when it does act it achieves the most... The UN is a vessel for ideas and inspiration comes from the UN and the Council of Europe who interact with the EU. They are important not just as inspirations because they do a lot of the spadework – a lot of the groundwork is done at UN and Council of Europe level. The EU then has a lot of work done for it before, say, it makes a Commission proposal.
(R23, Q10 & 11, p.3).

To be honest the big reason we are doing it is because of the EU. You need the policy dimension of Europe to push it through. I think there are a few big problems with gender mainstreaming actually (R3, Q15, p. 5).

It started at the European level and was talked about for years and then people finally agreed to take it on. People started getting worried about the annual reports on gender equality in the civil service and public bodies generally. The EEA was pushing for the reports to be done since 1985-86. By 1995 not a lot of improvement was showing. People were putting in equal opportunities policies but were not achieving gender equality. So it was thought that maybe gender mainstreaming was the way to go. The EU had a pivotal role. It's the stick mainly, and also in broadening concepts and thinking. The UN obviously, from the international conferences, had a role as well. (R13, Q7, p. 4).

It started with equal pay and then the marriage bar and spouses' pensions – a European basis was set and of course birth control too... The impetus was there and a lot of things happen like that. If you look at historical movements they have tended to happen like that. Like the people who started tearing down the Berlin Wall. It didn't just happen overnight. Communism was failing everywhere. There are cyclical movements in politics and rights and people get the idea. People need the push from elsewhere. The Dutch have a very well developed social policy its generally positive in the ex-colonies. (R17, Q7, p. 5).

We implement government policy here as a semi-state body. Therefore, each one that comes from the EU – the NOW or HORIZON or whatever they are called, we do. Let me give you an example.(R17, Q4, p. 4).

Basically from the EU. That equal opportunities between women and men is to be considered in all structural fund policies, its part of the structural funds regulations for this round of funding from the EU. Where they got it from, I don't know. ...it's the EU that says you must collect gender disaggregated indicators, put equal opportunities in project selection and look at it in evaluation. We have one or two other things but they are not much more, so it's really EU programmes. (R1, Q28, p. 13).

You see I don't know who originally started pushing it here. The EU I suppose just seems to be the beginning of every single improvement in women's condition in Ireland.
(R1, Q8, p.2).

The EU pushes it. I don't know who's pushing it in the EU though. Some people say (names policy-maker) rather cynically that the EU kind of adopts gender equality policies to be more meaningful to the average person on the street. Other people say it's the French commitment not to have cheaper pay to women. Other people say it's to, you know, increase GDP and economic spending. (R1, Q5, p. 2)

I know the Dutch have said the same thing. I was at a Council of Europe meeting and the Dutch were saying, you know this is forcing women into the Labour Force and kind of saying; no wonder women wouldn't be into it because if you are not well qualified or a high earner being moved into the labour force is no help at all to you... Whereas other places like Sweden, where loads of women are in the labour force and gender mainstreaming is about better policies to support them, it's a completely different ethos. (R1, Q40, p. 16).

The European Court of Auditors looks at the books but also audits for things being in accordance with EU regulations. The officials come from the Commission to make sure that information is there (R18, Q13, p. 4).

The EU has given the equality thing a huge boost, like the marriage bar had to go when we joined. I'd say it was a mixture of everything – structural funds, directives and regulations. .(R18, Q8, p. 3).

Our own commitment to equality is that recruitment for each unit in our OP promotes equal opportunities. The EU recommends that there should be at least 40% of one gender on committees (R18, Q3, p. 2).

1996. I think it was around a lot longer than that. I would have thought that Beijing was more the end than the beginning of the road. I am sure it was much earlier than that. Yeah, look here sure, we organised a seminar in 1996 called 'Fourth Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Mechanisms for Mainstreaming. So the idea was definitely being bandied about much earlier. Sure I remember in the last round of the structural funds in the 1996 to 2000 period the Commission were on at us to mainstream. We couldn't really do it because we had absolutely no resources at the time. Yeah, I remember (names senior policy-maker) and I being at a meeting where the Commission were pushing it (R3, Q7, p. 4).

It's easier to do the whole thing than some of it. The NDP is dealt with as a single entity – it's very complicated really. This time round the NDP is part national and part European but previously it was all European money (R3, Q8, p. 4).

It was seen as an EU idea, but not so much now (R3, Q9, p. 4).

I would say the EU and government combined. The fact that it is a statutory instrument to gender mainstream. The enforced requirement makes all the difference. There is logic to gender mainstreaming, there are specific workshops and proofing requirements. The impetus is there from the EU because our funding is dependent on meeting gender requirements on the programme complements and the NDP. The Beijing conference is immaterial once it gets down to us. The fact that it is a funding requirement focuses us a lot. (R8, Q3, p. 6)

Well for the period that I was working on gender equality policy the EU influence was huge. In Ireland I think the economy was just right as well. Things were beginning to boom and there was scope for change in the labour market (R15, Q1, p. 1).

German equivalent recommended that we try to get what we could while times were good. For instance, in Germany now because there are less jobs efforts are being made to get women back into the home. I would say that the economy opens doors, it drives things. In the EU the labour supply was getting tighter and from where I stood in the EU it made a big difference to have structural fund money (R15, Q2, p. 1).

It was felt that in the last round of funds not all was achieved, so in the next round 2000-2006 they set about helping us to get more funding. The Department of Finance opposed that quite strongly (R15, Q2(a), p. 1).

But the EU leant on all government departments – they had to do it because it hadn't been done in the last round – didn't like the idea of giving marks. Some people in the EU have an idea that Irish women are downtrodden. We ended up doing more than other member states. Within the EU itself – the Commission – which is a civil service for the EU since Jacques Santer's time, and the Women's Lobby pushed it. (R15, Q5,p.2).

The EU pushed the idea and used funding as a lever. Partly an ideological commitment and also because of labour market needed women returners. (R15, Q12, p. 4).

...the EU gives things a bit of teeth (R15, Q17, p. 5).

As far as the gender mainstreaming thing is going I think that it is the European Commission that is driving it (R24, Q11, p. 4).

Odile Canton is now the Head of DGV a very powerful woman and really pushes it. Some of those women have an almost fanatical interest in gender mainstreaming. I think it is because they are older women and lived through the really appalling inequality and still have a lot of the old feelings... I think it is really the personalities driving it (R24, Q12, p. 4).

I think people are doing it because the EU wants it. We haven't thought it through. Did anybody stand up to the EU and ask why they want it? I don't think anybody's heart is in it. The EU is becoming quite influenced by fanatical feminists. It's like it's really from a theoretical point of view – that they are trying to prove a point about feminism really. But it has to be relevant to people's lives today. Some of these civil servants' salaries could be used on doing something else. Everybody has loads of work and there is too much form filling. The problem is that there is no safe place to raise these issues (R24, Q17, p.7).

Role of Policy-makers

Things can change. Sure when we started on this in 1999-2000 we had never thought about it before and nobody was talking about it. Then (names gender equality expert)'s unit started training and took a fictitious case as an example in order to try and change the mindset. It has improved a lot but there is still a lot of resistance. (R6, Q11, p.4).

Well the resistance would be 'There's no point in doing this.' 'Why do we need to do this?' But then when they sit down and look at it because they are pushed into it they start to see it differently. But they still can't see the long-term impact of collecting data or whatever (R6, Q12, p. 4).

I mean every aspect of life is affected by gender and we are not going to change things yet. At the moment we are really only gathering information and will be able to act on it in the future. I mean HR will be able to quantify progress but there are really no direct issues affecting gender in our OP (R6, Q14, p. 4).

I understand from my own experience at the department of finance that they would just have wanted to gender mainstream according to the regulations from the EU. So that would mean that only the measures financed by the structural funds, that would only be 7% of the whole NDP budget, would be mainstreamed. But somehow, this department, by whatever means, managed to get the whole NDP mainstreamed. I'd say there was blood spilt in order to get that to happen. So now there are a huge amount of government programmes and government activities and expenditure are all being mainstreamed (R5, Q10, p. 2).

I remember a few years ago somebody from this department coming to speak to us about gender mainstreaming and nobody being any the wiser. But if people have to work with the idea themselves, then they will have taken it on board and at least are prepared to give it a shot (R5, Q13, p. 2).

...it's a bit like being an entrepreneur. Because I was at the monitoring committee meetings for the earlier plans I knew that people didn't know how to do Gender Mainstreaming, so then I thought that if we applied for technical assistance funding in the next plan (current NDP) so this time we put in a proposal for what is now (names gender equality expert)'s unit then we were able to help people in other departments to Gender-Proof their plans and to train people (R2, Q22 & 23, p. 4).

I argued that it should be part of a government department because I think that's the only way to influence the system, other people thought that it should be part of the equality authority or something, but I argued that we knew how to influence the system in here (R2, Q24, p. 4).

...they (politicians) wouldn't listen to it if they thought that a civil servant had suggested it (R2, Q 41, p. 7).

'mainstreaming' is seen as what evolves as best practice which eventually becomes the norm. So it's a matter of building that priority into policy development. It's a move away from the 'We don't do that here' mentality (R7, Q1, p. 1).

My role is in shaping and influencing government policy. Because we are dealing with it in a mainstream framework. Government decisions are about consensus. If a matter coming up before government is a problem for a particular area you can put in your ideas. We try to work with a government departments – my department isn't responsible for every area (R10, Q13, p. 5).

There was an evaluation done of it, I can e-mail you a copy no problem. One of the problems that people said they had was that they could be trained up and interested in doing gender mainstreaming but then they could go back to a department and find that their boss or the AS at the department hasn't a clue. I think the evaluation will show that people don't understand what it means (R22, Q2, p. 1).

Without some political understanding of gender mainstreaming it is dependent on people's personal opinion on it. It is a really radical thing to do if you do it with positive action... The operationalisation and implementation of gender mainstreaming has been hugely influenced by the backlash and people are implementing only according to their own understanding of it. It is up to the individual and I think this means that there is a lot of lip service paid to it (R22, Q7, p. 4).

These are the steps that civil servants would take to gender proof policies. The idea is that they would ask questions and that kind of step by step approach applies to functionaries. We found that the problem was that they got stuck on question 2. They'd say well we don't know if there is a differential impact because the database isn't up and running. The big thing is that the people who are being asked to proof do not have the information or training to do that (R22, Q11, p. 5).

There needs to be an agreed list as to what amounts to prejudice or it will not work. Work must be done in relation to building an environment where we all agree what we are measuring. It is certainly the way to go though because it stops women being added on at the last minute as AOB as was always the case. It is important because the way in which decisions are made is quite fluid (R16, Q28, p. 7).

In terms of ranking those things, I would say policy-makers here were very significant because they have pushed that. The Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform and the Equality Authority and (names gender equality expert)'s unit can do a lot. If you set up a unit and give people responsibility for something that's the way to get it into the consciousness of policy-makers of implementers. That's the way to get it done. (R21, Q8, p. 4).

I think you really need to build a consensus behind the matter. You need measuring sticks and benchmarks. We all agree that there should be a measure but we don't know what to put in it (R21, Q22, p. 5).

...for a long time departments didn't talk to each other. That's changed now so there has been some success (R19, Q2, p. 1).

The difficulties with gender mainstreaming from an evaluation perspective are threefold. There is no clear objective. What is it we are trying to do? There is no data available. We have no methodological tools. If work is being done we can't evaluate it without these (R21, Q5, p. 3).

But also it is the caliber of person you are dealing with. There are people who have to do this that may not have the knowledge. I think that the champions of these issues need to work hard. (names gender equality expert)'s unit is doing well. Most people are very interested and want to do it. You get the odd person who doesn't want to do it for some personal or ideological reason but most people are willing to at least explore the issue (R21, Q6, p. 3).

The question a civil servant always has to ask themselves is why am I doing all this? But with gender and gender mainstreaming people don't talk about it in everyday

life. Nobody is talking about how many women are working on the port tunnel. They might be talking about childcare but gender mainstreaming is not an issue that seems to affect people... if you ask me it's a waste of resources that could be put to better use... I think that the Irish civil service is poor at conceptualizing why do we do things... it is driven politically by men who are politically correct and push it because they are afraid not to. There is an obsession with data and a lack of obsession with ideas. That is a very anti-intellectual strain in the Irish civil service (R24, Q13, p. 5).

There is a lot of hostility because it is very personal and invades people's personal space. People get very upset, especially older men. The problem is at a personal level. We need more positive energy (R24, Q18, p. 7).

I think that other issues like race and especially disability are now becoming more of a priority than gender. I mean we still have childcare problems but generally it is felt that the thing has been dealt with (R24, Q10, p. 4).

It is up against huge resistance within the public sector. You have people asking 'Why do I need to do this?' It is not self-evident even to those working in the area. There is also a problem of measurability – because it is not concrete – that makes it very slippery to implement. The main problem is that you are depending on people in other departments to concretise it, so I think it could run into the sands (R3, Q17, p. 6)

NAPS is a major project that was introduced into everything and came from the Department of Social Welfare, now they have a separate office. That was the initiative of a few people. (names senior policy-maker)'s work on childcare is another example. The class of people on top who will push the role out is important. (R11, Q8, p. 4-5).

There was resistance in the enterprise area because they say that enterprise is gender neutral... (R15, Q4, p. 2).

In the civil service there are loads of women who push it, who really fight for it to be adopted and more broadly taken on board. (R1, Q7, p. 2).

Well certainly things like gender mainstreaming only really happen because of public service initiative. They change the way public services are delivered (R3, Q6, p. 3).

Role of Women's Movement

Were you at the national conference on representation of women at the Taoiseach's department a couple of months ago? Well that was my idea – to suggest that the NWCI do some research to show that things are different in other countries and to ask the government why there are 50% female ministers in other countries but not here. I am always saying to them that it is no good just complaining about the government not doing enough, you need to show them. After a while you just become seen as a whinger and the government gets sick of you. The business and farming communities know that buttering the government up a bit is much more effective in getting them to take on more of your demands (R2, Q39 & 40, p. 7).

I would say the women's movement and particularly the NWCI played a very significant role in the social partner process. Our department had done the footwork.

Also an intelligent principal in Finance understanding what we are about. It put women at the negotiating table. The NWCI did play a role. Their role is to raise issues – it's not limited to that – it also involves presenting a workable case so the system can respond (R10 Q, 22, p. 8).

Anyway, that's my understanding of gender mainstreaming. I first came across it in 1996 when I started working on European Women's Lobby. Next thing I heard the Irish government announced it as official policy (R22, Q4, p. 2).

No we had never even heard of it. It was just suddenly introduced. I think the Irish government must have got it from the EU. We felt that we couldn't just push that. If we put all our eggs in one basket and backed just gender mainstreaming we would lose the woman's rights aspect or the positive action method (R22, Q5, p. 3).

I think that if the government were serious about gender mainstreaming they would have parallel positive action measures. That was always our concern about gender mainstreaming; that it would be used to replace positive action (R22, Q6, p. 3).

I think to be honest that the women's movement has really concentrated on being critical of gender mainstreaming. At least the academic wing of the women's movement has been really critical. The idea hasn't trickled down to the community activism side at all. It is very much a concept that comes from the top down. It's not like other issues that come from demands from the grass roots as well as ideas from the top. I mean then at least the civil servants get sandwiched in the middle and have to do something (R22, Q14, p. 7).

Organisations like the NWCI are important and influential. That sort of commitment to NGOs is very important... we engage with the advocacy groups a lot more. This attitude helps to influence things (R19, Q12, p. 5).

They are sterile debates – I am involved in social partnership and some of the feminists on those committees will blast in your ear even if it's a brilliant document, (names policy-maker) will go on about the number of women. It is utterly sterile and very narrow. I think there is a generational issue there. A lot of the women involved in the NWCI are older women and young women are not interested, there is no connection there for them (R24, Q19, p. 7-8).

We haven't created an alternative universe so the priorities of the existing universe are framing our actions (R14, Q19, p. 8).

The Council... links into gender mainstreaming in two ways. As a social partner we have the right to sit in NDP monitoring committees. That's where gender mainstreaming is being implemented in a practical way. My role is to sit on committees and to look at how government committees are considering the gender impact (R14, Q1, p. 1).

I remember working with people on the feminist side in 1998 at the NWCI – they were asked for 10 concrete ideas for each OP – and they didn't have the ideas. They were afraid – they tend to have a few very big wonderful concrete ideas. What we need is building blocks – it's easier to talk in big generalities and shoot the messenger – the policy-maker. Changes should be very simple and small. They are still hoping they will make some huge change. In fact, some of the smaller women's groups may have more practical ideas. (R15, Q8, p.3).

Well, the community and voluntary groups push it.(R1, Q5, p. 2).

I think it does get adopted due to feminist agitation (R1, Q6, p. 2).

Well, I just know that all the people pushing it in Ireland are women. All of them. I mean there are men who are extremely helpful in supporting it and in helping mainstreaming become more widely adopted, but the big pushers are all women. (R1, Q7, p. 2).

... outside, the national women's council would push it. You see I don't know who originally started pushing it here. (R1, Q8, p. 2).

Policy versus Legislative Agenda

I suppose one follows on from the other. Policy is based on legislation that sets the framework. European legislation especially. Policy comes through legislation in Europe. Government has to adjust policy and now gender mainstreaming is part of government policy I imagine that is because of requests under European legislation. But I think that the ideals behind policy are very important. You have to have the ideals but you also have to make them work (R4, Q10, p. 3).

So legislation is the first step... (R4, Q11, p. 3).

I think that legislation on its own is not enough to do the job. If you want to advance equality you have to do something else as well (R2, Q18, p. 4).

Sometimes legislation comes first. (R2, Q7, p. 2).

Legislation works well because it changes behaviour and then attitudes always change last (R2, Q8, p. 3).

Obviously, you need a few people to have the idea to introduce the legislation in the first place otherwise it would never happen. So the values of a few people must change first – but not necessarily the people implementing it, but the people pushing for it to be brought in – say the people in the Labour Party (R2, Q9 & 10, p. 3).

Generally I think that in Ireland it is bringing in legislation first that works because then you have to do it and follow through on the changes that the legislation makes. It is not enough to just have legislation; you have to follow through on it (R2, Q13, p. 3).

You see something is not policy unless it is in a plan " A GOVERNMENT DECISION." Once it becomes a government decision it means it has support at cabinet level (R2, Q25, p. 5).

So you have to do things under legislation and policy, but policy is pro-active. What we did is we got the Taoiseach to launch it while we were doing that, Josephine Feeley, Julie O'Neill, John O'Connell and Deirdre McRory were working on targets in the civil service and they got a decision on that (R2, Q26, p. 5).

The legislation role is to clarify rights and responsibilities. It also has a function in changing attitudes, which is really important, but that's a long term proposition. The role of positive action is to develop know-how and awareness and that depends on where you are coming from. If you know the gender area then positive action measures might become ways of developing best practice (R10, Q3, p. 2).

Implementation of that legislation may require huge mind changes in the mentality of those implementing it, like the policy or whatever. But the problem is that once you put legislation out you have no control over how it is interpreted (R22, Q10, p. 5).

I suppose legislation follows but policy can be wider. Legislation sets the minimum standard but it can't incorporate cultural or economic rights so policy documents become important. I can't see individual pieces of legislation having the same impact. The PPF is more important in my day to day work, or anything the NESF says is very important as well (R19, Q10, p. 4).

Well, legislation is policy. I would say that legislation is just a particular way of developing policy. Legislation is just a means of enforcing penalties for not applying policy. It's a means of driving policy forward, especially in the private sector. Its very hard to get the private sector to change without a stick (R3, Q5, p. 3).

We'll direct employers to come up with equality policy and that's binding. That's the single biggest way we can promote equality rather than just prohibit inequality. (R11 Q3, p.2).

To be pro-active is important at the end of the day. It's the other half of the legislation (R11, Q4, p. 3).

It is important to give seniority and clout otherwise policy is lip service. (R11, Q9, p. 5).

Well, there's a definite commitment to it that was made at the negotiations. People are mindful of all the horizontal issues.(R18, Q5, p.2).

Well, it's a legal requirement. (R18. Q7, p.2).

They both have to operate simultaneously. Policy-making on its own is not enough. You need the threat there; you need to have the ability to use the stick all the time. On its own it wouldn't be enough. Other member states have great policy and weak legislation and I don't think they are as good as us. Our legislation is very effective.(R13, Q4, p. 2).

Femocrats and Bureaucracy

The other point is a good one but it is too idealistic to think that everyone will change – like they say of mainstreaming – if it was being done we wouldn't need it. I think you need someone to drive these things forward (R21, Q9, p. 4).

All the mainstream policy-makers are supposed to implement it and I am supposed to advise them on how to do it. (R1, Q29, p. 13).

And you need people to push it. People like (names gender equality expert) can push it (R3, Q14a, p. 5).

H2: that the gender equality agenda in the Republic of Ireland has evolved from a women's rights to a gender equality agenda because of the adoption of gender mainstreaming.

Evolution from Women's Rights to Gender Mainstreaming

I think it is a good idea to have gender in all sub-measures because if there was just one measure on gender nobody else would do anything about gender elsewhere. Now at the moment we can't put in specific targets on gender equality into the sub-measures because we know it would be impossible to reach them. We have explained that to (names gender equality expert) and she's okay with that. The problem is that

if we put in the gender targets, knowing that we couldn't reach them, then the whole programme could perish on the basis of not reaching gender targets (R6, Q18, p. 5).

When you are working in equality, it is only when people have forgotten about the issue that you know you have achieved it. The language and concepts are in there now. Now we are worried about the fact that there are so few judges and TDs who are women. But I think that the real challenge now is to manage family and work, that is as important as equality. Family friendly policies are important for both sexes and there is no way that I could have done the job I do without my husband's support. There have been some bad things for men arising out of equality. I remember years ago when I was a social worker, men didn't have a hope of getting children in court. It was just assumed that children were better off with their mother and I definitely know some cases where this was not true (R2, Q35 & 36, p. 6).

Between the 70s and 90s conversation and discussion moved into gender equality from women's rights. We are now actively working to resurrect women's rights. I always make a point when I am delivering a keynote address to the Council delegation at our annual meeting to talk about women's rights. Gender equality is only a word I use when I am talking to civil servants. We are the National Women's Council, our focus is women's rights. Who is going to say that they are against gender mainstreaming? It would be like saying you are against world peace (R22, Q13, p. 6).

I would say though that I think women's rights is stronger than gender equality. I would prefer to be standing on the street, fighting for women's rights (R16, Q13, p. 4).

With women's rights it is recognised that it is needed to assert them and it sounds like something that is needed, that you have a moral right to them. That in some way society is oppressing what belongs to you. Whereas gender equality sounds like an aspiration you should hold, it is more vague (R16, Q14, p. 4).

I suppose the thing about gender equality though is that it does imply equality between men and women and recognises that whereas women's rights only comes from a female perspective, gender equality is more balanced because it includes men (R16, Q15, p. 4).

There is still a little bit of a perception that we are still at the women's lib stage. The initial reaction to something like gender mainstreaming is never positive I am afraid. There is still a bit of resistance to do with gender. We were re-negotiating the NAPS last year and one of the target groups was women but I don't think we really grasped the equality issues – I don't want to be quoted on this but I think that we could have done it better. I would do it differently at the next review. Our problem was that we had a lot of work done on it before we thought about including gender (R19, Q3, p. 2).

It is up to women to make their voices heard in the political process. More women there at decision-making level in the implementing bodies and civil service. Even if they are not necessarily feminists may be slightly more aware that women's and men's needs are important (R14, Q15a, p. 7).

The move from women's rights to gender equality can cut both ways. Women's rights is only women. Has to be both male and female. Some women's organisations feel that there's been a loss in terms of women's interests. When you highlight women's issues – it dilutes it for women. Gender mainstreaming should not be seen as just applying women's ideas (R14, Q13, p. 6).

My other concern is that it is swallowing up funding and lots of resources that may be more effectively used elsewhere. The money could be used for specific and important things like childcare or term-time working that would really have an immediate and clear impact on people's lives (R3, Q18, p. 6).

That's the problem for equality – it is marginalized – to some extent that's the benefit with gender mainstreaming – it centralises the concepts so that they become part of general policy and then you get funding and that's what you want in the long run; to become part of the general funding. Sometimes I just can't believe how short-sighted people are. Equality is about everything and in order to achieve it there has to be a fundamental change – economically, socially, culturally or on a human rights basis. (R3, Q11, p. 5).

I knew what gender mainstreaming was. Most women do. I think within our own department there are a lot of men that I can't see coming round to it. I found that when I was going to Spain if I mentioned it to the men they said 'oh you are going to that women's thing.' I don't know whether it's lack of education or narrow mindedness because this man who said it to me wasn't sexist at all. (R20, Q4, p. 3).

It's very slow in agriculture anyway. We are probably the worst department. Working with farmers is hard but with young people being educated there is bound to be some change as well. If you can educate guys and girls to stay on the farm. But kids don't want to farm nowadays (R20, Q5, p. 4).

When I read 'gender equality' that's good because it means it can work for men and women – not just women's rights. I wouldn't be into women's rights at all (R20, Q6, p. 4).

Women's rights. That's what it should be called now we say gender equality, which is much more PC terminology. And even before that we would have called it sex equality.(R13, Q9, p. 5).

I think it's the liberal radical difference that the legislation and the positive action is all liberal equal opportunities. You know, everybody must be able to equally access things and gender mainstreaming as far as I'm concerned is the radical approach. It's looking at the outcomes for different groups. Breaking stereotypes. (R1, Q30, p. 14).

The thing about gender mainstreaming is that it is about men and women, not just women. It is a bigger issue then. (R18, Q4, p.2).

We weren't implementing any fancy thing like gender mainstreaming. We could have laughed at the term when we heard it – we'd have just done our own thing... I was in the Council for the status of women and on the board of the EEA for years (R17, Q5, p. 4).

The philosophy is just the same now but to us, the issues today would have been the icing on the cake. The aim is to have equality in the workforce but at all levels of pay and seniority. (R17, Q6, p. 4).

Irish Political Culture

I had to deal with extreme prejudice. There was the marriage bar at the time and we had to argue with men who at the time who wouldn't conceive that women had the right to work (R24, Q2, p. 1).

There was no equality at the time; we were treated appallingly – people would laugh in your face if you said anything. There was glaring inequality – you had to leave the civil service if you got married. There were no family laws. There was different pay for men and women (R24, Q3, p. 2).

I remember when I became pregnant with my first child people said 'how could you leave your child?' They thought I was a cruel woman to leave my child (R24, Q4, p. 2).

When we started there was a group of women AO's who met as part of the AO's association, maybe about 20 people in all... Most of them just couldn't stick it and left to stay at home and look after the children. Some of them have gone back now. Eithne Fitzgerald was one of them but we really had to fight the system...You were always trying to be Ms. Perfect (R24, Q7, p. 3).

The Economic Position of Women in Ireland

Most women would really like to come in and out of the workforce with ease, but it's not actually very easy to leave and go back in on a permanent basis. They are afraid that they would lose opportunities if they took a career break. Of course they can job share too. From our point of view these women are a vast untapped pool of labour. (R17, Q1, p. 2).

Women basically had no economic rights – they were classed as adult dependents within a family under the social welfare code (R7, Q7, p. 3).

Political Participation of Women in Ireland

I do think that there should be a greater focus on women in the political process... That's really where there needs to be a battle. We need to change the views of legislators as well as policy-makers (R19, Q14, p. 6).

Women and Public Policy in Ireland

National Programmes and the NDP decide the big areas of spending. So the social partners influence things in that sense. The national agreements, the PPF, includes commitment to gender mainstream and it commits money to it (R16, Q24, p. 6).

The partnership issue needs to be addressed – if the only people speaking on gender are the NWCI then we can only get so far. Gender mainstreaming requires other agents. The trade unions are very active – they have put the gender pay gap on the agenda. IBEC supply issues for the labour market. The EU is not a totally external influence. People see stuff emerging from Brussels but maybe it is not that external. The international perspective is very important. Both the EU and the UN are very important but Ireland shapes things (R10, Q7, p. 3).

Expectations go down in the course of negotiations. Social partnership does that and your expectation become shaped by it. Institutionalised feminism – the women's movements and activists – are not necessarily creating an alternative universe (R14, Q20, p. 8).

The partnership process is very important. The extension of the partnership process and the extension of the partnership agenda to include equality and inclusion and the extension of the social partners to include the community and voluntary sector is

important because they have a broader view and a different way of working... This agreement isn't enshrined in legislation but is referred to a lot (R19, Q10, p. 4).

I think it's all about interacting with the system at the points where it is relevant. You have to be in there changing it from the inside. You have to be in there at the meeting in order to be able to make a difference (R2, Q34, p. 6).

The Second Commission on the Status of Women (1993)

The policy agenda has changed significantly since 1993. I know in their manifesto the Labour Party committed themselves to the Second Commission Report. That minister Mervyn Taylor wanted to make a mark. A personal commitment from an individual in power can make a difference. (R13, Q3, p. 2).

THE GENDER EQUALITY AGENDA

Gemma Hussey set up the Equality Committee she was interested in Equality and when somebody like that takes an interest in Equality that makes a difference, and with a report it gets funding and then becomes part of the system. Once that happens, that's the clincher (R4, Q1, p. 1).

Gender mainstreaming is very different because now we are putting gender into everybody and everything. Previously we had positive action and a few people benefited from that but it was still at the margins no matter how good it was. Now if gender mainstreaming is implemented properly it should lead to... the outcome should be that men and women can maximise their potential as men or women (R4, Q12, p. 3).

The impetus was definitely from the EU. But there is no status with it. There is still no status with equality. So who'd want to come in on it? Really, who would want to work in an area with no status?(R2, Q3, p. 2).

I think generally though people (it is implied that respondent is referring to civil servants in this context) see equality as an imposition, a difficulty. I defend the equality agenda all the time... The main thing I think is that Equality is always out of sync with society. Society is always the last thing to change (R2, Q4, p. 2).

Most equality issues are seen as crazy ones (R2, Q29, p. 5).

I call the equality agenda 'chipping away,' it's not a big exciting agenda (R2, Q32, p. 6).

We have money and resources because we are part of Justice. There is no comparison between the budget of Equality and Law Reform now with the budget of Equality and Law Reform when it was independent. Now we are one of the main players (R3, Q13, p. 5).

There's a sharper focus on gender equality – mainly because of the law, employers are aware of it (R9, Q1, p. 1).

Gender equality is seen as a HR issue... the civil service is a very conservative, traditional organization (R9, p,2).

In an ideal world gender mainstreaming would be the right way to go about it. It would be great, if you were starting from scratch then you could do it. But we have a

legal base that is prohibitive. We legislate against rather than for things. It's beginning to have an impact in terms of behaviour too. I mean in the past you heard people coming out with the most ludicrous things. But now even if they think it, they know that it is not acceptable to say things. So I would say that we have a legal and cultural framework that works against gender mainstreaming. If you compare the Irish with the French approach. The French legislate for rights, so people know their rights (R9, Q2, p. 3).

The law makes employers responsible and sensitive to this type of thing. The legal element is important. We haven't had cases taken against us but other employers have. I know from talking to people in the private sector that they have many more cases taken against them. The attitude there is to fight the case, try to win it but also to try to avoid the situation arising again. So, the legislation does work in that sense. There is going to be greater pressure now because both law and policy are there (R9, Q6, p. 4).

...10 years ago when the department was set up there was no money. We had very small staff and resources when we were the department of Equality and Law Reform and couldn't really do much more than tidy the pieces of legislation that were immediately relevant. The total budget was tiny. But then we managed to get £1m for childcare and were able to get going. (R3, Q3, p. 2).

The reason for setting up Equality and Law Reform was to give status to Equality, but it actually marginalized it. It had no funding, no personnel and Mervyn Taylor had not status. I suppose you could say that we did the macro-level work like legislation but couldn't do the micro-level stuff like gender proof policy (R3, Q10, p. 5).

I'm aware of the First Commission report on the Status of Women has to be a link between that and important successes. To date there has been great advances in terms of violence against women and progress regarding property rights and other areas. It is interesting that we delivered on these areas that were certainly not internationally driven (R10, Q4, p. 2).

Equality Legislation since the 1970s

The legislation area developed from the 1970s here and that was expected to deliver everything – now we realise that we were a bit naïve to think that it could. We've gone through the stages of realising the limits of legislation. (R10, Q2, p. 2).

I have very nebulous links with gender mainstreaming apart from the fact that in the 1980s I ran the office for Women's Affairs that was Nuala Fennell's department at the time. I wrote almost single-handedly a major report. It was the report of the working party on Women's Affairs. It was called 'Agenda for Practical Action.' I have lots of experience of this area (R24, Q1, p. 1).

There were lots of different pieces of legislation to be reformed apart from the two obvious pieces of legislation: the Equal Status Act and divorce. There was also things like the Data Protection Act to be tied up... equality was really the social conscience arm of the law reform department (R3, Q2, p. 1).

Mervyn Taylor pushed from within the Labour Party. That was taken up strongly by John O'Donoghue – he was very good to us. You need a visionary to change things and Mervyn Taylor was that.(R11,Q5, p. 4)

...that gender is the single biggest issue in relation to employment (R11, Q1, p.1)

There is no point in having a right unless you know about it and what to do about it. (R11, Q2, p.2).

I suppose the key events would have been the establishment of the first commission and joining the EU. We took on a requirement for equal pay. The 76 directive brought in equality as well. But prior to the legislation it was already in the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Pay was a big issue in the early days, but once people started thinking about it whether it was fair or not it opened the door to ideas about equality. I think it was introduced originally because France already had equal pay and they didn't want the others to have an advantage, it was a competitiveness priority really. In the Treaty of Rome and from the early 1970s pay led the way. It was extremely unfair that people were paid on the basis of their marital status or gender for the same work. People didn't realise it was strange until congress started talking about it, Yvonne Galligan's thesis would have a lot about it (R13, Q1, p. 1).

...setting up a separate department meant that policy-makers were addressing it more directly (R13, Q2, p. 1).

...we are more or less originators of the sexual harassment stuff (R13, Q5, p. 2).

Investment in Equality relative to other policy areas

People have to change the way they work. It's not just a matter of 'here's a new programme, give us the money and we'll do it.' It means changing the way they people do the work they are already doing. It demands more of their time because they have to talk to more people and people's time is basically a resource issue. If one person is trying to do it they get very frustrated if others are trying as well. Economics dictates and it always did. In the past countries relied on economic sources to survive. The social stuff is always on the side – an add-on (R19, Q7, p. 3).

Positive action measure is specifically for women. €35m over the life of the NDP for stand alone projects (R10, Q15, p. 6).

There is not that much spent on gender mainstreaming – our responsibility it to co-ordinate and monitor. Look at the budget; it would be nothing in comparison with something like FAS. Or look at the budget of some other initiatives in the NDP. Things like apprenticeships have huge budgets but women don't benefit because they are not on the live register (R4, Q17, p. 5).

H3: that ambiguities surrounding the interpretation and definition of gender mainstreaming, manifest in the language of gender mainstreaming impede its successful implementation.

Definitions and Interpretations of Gender Mainstreaming

Well there is always the possibility that there is gender prejudice, but I suppose you never know. I think there is a problem though – that it is a very complicated idea and it's not very clear (R5, Q14, p. 3).

...it's actually called the High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming. It's chaired by Odile Quentin at the Commission – was established by her I think. I have been at two meetings now and I couldn't believe it when at the third meeting a big debate

started about what we mean by gender mainstreaming. This is a high level group and after three years they weren't clear about what it meant. Basically, I think its lends itself to meaning whatever people want it to mean (R5, Q15, p. 3).

The more we talk about gender mainstreaming the clearer we will be. You need to be clear about it (R10, Q12, p. 5).

While we are gender mainstreaming at all levels and phases we started a process. It's so long-term. EU definition about positive action – a number of experts use the Council of Europe definition of gender mainstreaming but refer to positive action. But the EU definition uses positive action. Experts use the Council of Europe all the time. In Sweden they are interested in moving off positive action. What do you mean by gender mainstreaming? Now EU's definition is the NDP definition. That's very important (R10, Q18, p. 7).

As regards gender mainstreaming there still remains a lot of confusion as to what you are actually talking about, and with proofing... I know when the idea was thrown out first a lot of women's groups thought that if their project was mainstreamed it meant that they would get a permanent stream of money. In fact, it meant the opposite. If a project was doing really well then it would be taken on all over the place. An awful lot of groups thought that it meant that their project would be fully funded when in fact it meant that it would stop being a small positive action measure and actually be taken on by government departments (R16, Q9, p. 3).

I think some of the problem is that we have shared and implied values and assumptions that are unstated and only come to light when something like 'gender mainstreaming' is presented to a policy-maker who knows nothing about gender (R16, Q10, p. 3).

I suppose the onus is on policy-makers to have clear statements to express a complex idea. That's not very easy at all, though I suppose that's what people like you are up to. The idea is to be flexible, to allow family friendly working but from a capitalist perspective, but there are definitely values behind words. I suppose the responsibility is more on us to speak clearly. I always think that, if I am presenting an idea that I must think of my audience and try to be clear. I try to use straightforward words to express something and to identify if I am making any assumptions. I suppose we do use a lot of jargon in our work (R16, Q12, p. 4).

When I look at the NDP on a broad scale it is a big plan with degrees of knowledge and I can tell you there are some very senior people involved in that plan that wouldn't be able to get their heads around the idea of gender mainstreaming. If you bring it down to a base level it is more difficult to implement than people are used to (R7, Q15, p. 5).

We might need to think about what it means. I was baffled by it for a long time and then heard that it meant incorporating equality between men and women – for once Europe used plainer language. I am good with jargon and I found it misleading... there needs to be a clear definition of what it's trying to achieve (R12, Q12, p. 5).

There is confusion in some areas – maybe not as linked to women before. Most problematic departments are not those we would expect. People who do have difficulty in the Department of Agriculture with rural proofing is because it is a very different area with no research done. Gender is not at that pre-development stage. The gender equality unit has done some training of huge number of civil servants. The DFA's equality policies and are equality proofed – are actually getting to another stage even if there isn't a commonly agreed definition (R14, Q17, p. 7).

The goals of gender mainstreaming

Mainstreaming stops gender being pushed out – whatever your position, your gender is considered. Mainstreaming is looking at the person. But it is still a very new concept and has really only been in practice for a year (R4, Q16, p. 5).

The Limitations of gender mainstreaming

The thing about gender mainstreaming is that some people present it as where it is at now. I suppose (names gender equality expert)'s unit would now but (names policy-maker) would argue it's only at its inception, that in fact there is still an important role for positive action measures as part of gender mainstreaming (R5, Q7, p. 2).

There's a danger under gender mainstreaming that people will adopt a gender-blind approach and that activity will diminish (R10, Q16, p. 6).

One of the main problems with gender mainstreaming, I think, is that nobody has a clue what it means, including the civil servants who are working on it. We recently won a tender from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform to provide training on gender mainstreaming which we ran in 2000-2001 (R22, Q1, p. 1).

The thing with something like gender mainstreaming is that it is easy to say that you are doing gender but actually do nothing (R22, Q6, p. 3).

I think the prognosis is variable. In such a diverse programme it is hard to say anything else. Gender mainstreaming training is good because it helps people to learn what it means. (R12, Q13, p. 5).

The problems we came across was that people said 'What do you want us to do?' It needs to be more prescriptive. 'How would you design it now?' Maybe you would design a programme differently when you have considered gender. But I think it could turn people off and give them an excuse not to do it. In Sweden I think a lot of time is spent doing the research and not making changes.(R12, Q7, p.3).

There is a small risk with gender mainstreaming but without a risk you will never make an impact – you are afraid of being accused of going native. Really what you need to do is make it easy for them. People are working very hard and need things to be easy. There is no kudos in doing something like gender mainstreaming. Some departments would feel you'd lost it – in Finance you would get no merit for doing gender mainstreaming. (R15, Q10, p. 4).

Another problem with gender mainstreaming is that it could be a distraction from more equality towards a becoming a mechanism you could play with. If a Minister came into my office now and said I need to be seen to be doing something about gender equality but I don't actually want to change anything I might suggest doing something like gender mainstreaming. So it could be a distraction. There are pressures all over the system. FOI and PMDS stuff, disability services, supposed to be mainstreaming them, parliamentary questions. That's a much more clear thing – there are much more concrete issues. The demands are too much – it requires too much initiative and requires too much intelligence (R3, Q20-21, p. 6-7).

The idea has been adopted and it's moving into the discourse of policy-making but I wouldn't say it's been completely implemented (R1, Q2, p.1).

I think it would be a great success if 5 to 10 significant changes were made and even if you didn't look into your soul on every single policy a few changes – especially for poorer women – would be a success. (R15, Q11, p. 4).

You have to work hard to understand it at first. Once you do understand it is one of those things that is self-evident, true and real. You start thinking 'we must do this, why weren't we doing this earlier?' But it's not much good it being a good idea if people don't understand it. If you want to make changes you have to change how people think, interact and how they do their work (R19, Q5, p. 3).

DEVELOPING THEORY TO INFORM PRACTICE

How do you measure a better life – it is very difficult. Maybe that's what gender proofing could have been about – trying to identify how relevant gender is and compatible to a measure before you go changing it. Given objectives, people are not going to start considering gender. Given that there is a gender impact – need to make it accessible. It's a question of resources – it costs people staff time. You have to keep questioning proportionality, monitoring information costs money. (R12, Q15, p.5).

Theory provides conceptual tools and provides irrefutable arguments. Pragmatically speaking we are using the same language and are moving on more limited space. Ursula Barry and people fighting over limited resources say that theory brings it outside that space. It is a weakening of the policy process that theory is divorced (R14, Q21, p. 9).

There's a huge gap between theory and practice 'cause theory's full of best practice and the ideal and I just don't even read these best practice manuals that come in because they're just a waste of time. What you really need is activities; a list of things that people have actually done is 5,000 times more useful and helpful to everybody involved in it than the most ideal best practice model. (R1, Q25, p. 12).

I'm trained in this area but, like, if somebody rings me up from some department and says I am building a new road what are the gender equality impacts and I told them read this best practice model guide they'll never read it and never do anything. But if I say to them something like 'Well now, you are building a road now that's going to benefit people with their own cars unless you have public transport on it. Think about how you could put public transport on this new road and then it will be beneficial for more groups, particularly women.' That's just what you need, something that simple or, you know, like that refugee language support unit, just saying there was a big gap in male female numbers taking it up and we did this and they increased. That's what you need; specific stuff that's been done and works.(R1, Q25, p. 12).

A practical policy tool

It does lead to better policy implementation. I think particularly there a lot of policies that just look at providing things and don't look at how different groups of people will use them (R1, Q3, p.1).

The Role of Language in the Spread of Mainstreaming Norms

Everyone agrees that language is very powerful in terms of perpetuating racism but not sexism. Sexist language is unconscious. Come across very resistant aggressive types who don't see the point of all this; They don't see the male norm as having anything wrong with it. There is a male code of language and women often feel

uncomfortable with that. I know men who say that they even phrase things differently if a woman is present. (R4, Q14, p. 4).

This ship will be – well I won't say manned – it will be staffed by those with the qualifications. Now whether those people are male or female is irrelevant, but we've no control over who comes forward. Now I can't see what the gender impact would be of something like that. There may be a gender impact, but I can't see it (R6, Q3, p. 1).

I only came to this department last November so I can't promise that I'll be able to answer your questions. I have only recently come to terms with what gender mainstreaming means (R5, Q1, p. 1).

There was some jargon to learn but the main thing was trying to get to grips with gender mainstreaming. You know there are 3 definitions of gender mainstreaming flying around. One from the Council one from the Commission and one more I can't remember... There aren't even big differences between the definitions but they could result in different things. I suppose a big cultural and economic change is needed, I think that's what we say in the Equality for Women Measure. But I don't know if talking about gender mainstreaming has capacity to change attitudes. But really the thing is who is talking about it, there is no point in just talking to each other about it. Need to go over to other departments and see if it is even having an effect there, not to mind having an impact outside departments (R5, Q22 & 23, p. 5).

So when I came here I had never really heard of gender mainstreaming before (R5, Q2, p. 1).

People have raised language as an obstacle. I blow hot and cold on this. Often language on social policy is difficult. In some areas concepts are not difficult and work is still not being done. Experts set standards too high. They don't communicate properly and they talk down to women. In fact it's quite refreshing dealing with men and their pragmatic approach. Officials are used to dealing with language in areas like broadband technology and de-commissioning in the North. When people say that this area is so loaded – but it is an issue. We did need to make the leap to gender mainstreaming – could be transition anyway. When I started in the EEA the word 'discrimination' didn't trip off your tongue. Don't need too much jargon, but do need some concepts and theory to shift the paradigm. Resources are also an issue. People should know that you'll never have enough resources when you are dealing with marginal areas. It is interesting that you haven't identified it as an issue. (R10, Q10, p. 5).

To a large extent it is jargon but not entirely in our department. Partly the language has changed because one of the ways it is presented is as affecting men and women – not simply women. Gender equality affects both men and women. Partly it is jargon but in the world I work in, there has been an attitudinal change. People are more aware of the issue. They are aware of the complexity of the issues. Jargon change reflects that. People are more aware of equality issues. People have taken it to heart more but not taken it on to the extent where their attitude has changed (R9, Q16, p. 7). The word that springs to mind is... family-friendly, gender equality, equality policies, work life balance, term time leave (R9, Q17, p. 8).

There is a tendency to get lost in a lot of jargon in this job. Sometimes it is like a language unto itself. That is a barrier to understanding; you are right about that. But (names gender equality expert)'s unit is pounding the message home. She presents simple diagrams and examples of the idea to the uninitiated (R7, Q15, p. 5).

What I am saying now is that there is more discussion now than there was in 1996 when I started working on the structural funds for the last round of money. Now there are representatives for gender mainstreaming on the monitoring committees. There is more discussion and it is more sophisticated... I would say yes to a change in language because basically it means that these issues are given more airspace. Whether that actually signifies a bigger change I don't know. The jury is still out on that.
(R21, Q12 &13, p. 5).

We are conscious that what we say is politically correct language, but we are not necessarily taking the actual meaning on board. How many times do we say we are an equal opportunities employer... Department of Finance it was only in the last year or so that the second women principal was appointed. Their work practices just don't suit women with children. The days are end-loaded there and if something happens on a Saturday and you are needed you are expected to react. People say that Asst Secretaries have no life. Dail adjournment debates are at night and you have to be there if it's your Minister. You might be able to get somebody to cover but if you are not there it is noted. If you have a couple of two or three year olds at home you just can't do that. The next time the minister needs a briefing late at night he won't call you if you weren't there the last time. You are not going to be seen where it counts (R24, Q9, p. 4).

I do think that looking at language is a great idea. Nobody ever uses the word 'girl' anymore (R24, Q14, p. 6).

It sounded very EU-ish – telling us what to do. A lot of people don't understand it or what they are supposed to do (R24, Q16, p. 7).

I think we have moved on from the idea of the deserted spouse. Unmarried mother would be lone parent now rather than single parent. ESRI reports and the official term generally used now would be 'women on home duties.' Marital status – as opposed to unmarried and sexual orientation (R14, Q14, p. 6).

To some extent I think you may have to grab the idea without understanding it. I remember going to numerous conferences on 'gender mainstreaming' and it was like they spoke a different language (R13, Q11, p. 6).

Well I suppose the biggest change I can think of is that in 1977 legislation talks about sex discrimination and in 1988 it was talking about gender discrimination. The interesting question is why this is the case? I think it's a very big change but I don't know how it happened. How did we make this shift? Well, I suppose gender is more all-encompassing than sex but I am not sure why the wording was changed. I don't know (R13, Q8, p. 5).

There are lots of different words, 'gender expression,' 'gender identity,' 'transgender,' 'transsexual' all these words are essentially related to the same thing. Gender expression is when somebody may be a man but may wish to express themselves as a woman. This is related to a gender identity which may be different to your sex. Transgender is at the stage of moving towards changing your gender identity. And finally transsexual is when people have sex changes...but the meanings of things change all the time I suppose (R13, Q9a, p. 5)

The most crucial change is the sex and gender one. That's a very important distinction. Is that a progression? I suppose in theory maybe it is. I suppose sex is more biological and gender is more related to cultural differences. It may be a

progression when you consider it includes things like transgender. Language evolves I suppose. (R13, Q10, p. 5).

Yeah, the first time you say 'gender mainstreaming' to someone they say 'What?' They haven't a clue what it means. If you say it's re-balancing that's not right. If you say it's women's issues that implies that it ignores men's issues. You can see people's eyes glaze over when you talk about it... I have to say that the language that is used is not very normal lang. Its quite jargony. You wouldn't sell it to the masses... If they want to promote it they need to make it more accessible.(R8, Q6, p. 8).

Well certainly it is not a general and only those who have attended training would be comfortable with the language used. It may be unfair but you have to know what's behind it – if it is couched in language that people understand would be more appropriate. If you say to people do this and it will improve the quality of fish they will ignore you. If you say to people do this it will improve the quality of fish and you will earn more money they will do it. But it's difficult to do that with gender. You just have to change somebody's mind. It's an awareness process so at the moment if they have to do it they will. (R8, Q9, p9).

...discussion may be, you know, far too high level a word. I think it's more like we have to do this gender stuff and a few people would do it really well and actually would discuss it and analyse it but most people wouldn't know what to do and would try to not really do anything on it except respond to queries as best they can. (R1, Q9, p. 4).

Most people just don't know what the gender equality differences are in their area they just don't see them. Like good people and committed and interested people that are into social justice and into best ways of working and best ways of doing policy and they just don't see it. So if they don't see it you can't really talk about any kind of increase in gender mainstreaming language because you are just talking about telling them that there are gender equality differences. (R1, Q17, p. 9).

It is more than a jargon change certainly. There is a huge jump in attitude changes towards women. The paternalistic approach is gone. Women are not seen as victims – as creatures to be protected. Notion that as women we can be agents in our own lives.Women are no longer dependents. There is a huge paradigm shift (R14, Q12, p. 6).

I don't think policy-makers are as muddled as they say. The ENTE have high levels of knowledge – but it involves extra work and no extra resources. The whole thing of having to change course and there is no kudos for it. NESC completed a report on poverty proofing by Sheila O'Connor (last year) in their recommendations stated that the reason poverty proofing wasn't proceeding was because it was thankless and not validated by own hierarchy (R14, Q16, p. 7).

THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF INTERNATIONAL NORMS REGARDING GENDER EQUALITY POLICY IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND.

But if you think about norm changing, like this is, they've only had somebody chasing them up to do this for two years. And you don't change the activities of government departments in two years. Absolutely no way. So I can see some places where they are doing things and they're usually due to committed people inside.

Your champions if you like, who push it for you inside an organisation (R1, Q23, p. 11).

The problem is that once things get instutionalised then it's a really big battle to change it (R2, Q37a, p. 6).

Feminist Critique and Bureaucratic Criticism: Gender Mainstreaming

In my experiences people involved in NGO's tend to be more conceptual. People coming up the ranks of the civil service may have started as CO and never went through the conceptual stage. NGOs are more academic people in general and that creates a gap. If you get totally tied up in concepts you might not get beyond that. In a way, in making it complex, through definitions you can get lost. (R15, Q9, p. 3).

Gender mainstreaming has not caused people to stand back. Gender mainstreaming is an add-on. It puts the spotlight on the end process rather than the beginning. (R14, Q4 & 5, p. 3).

The way it's been defined it hasn't tackled key issues – reversing structural inequalities. For people who are benefiting disproportionately now it involves loss of resources for some. For any system it is difficult to withdraw funding and change programmes mid-stream. Bureaucracy in Ireland – things tend to be built on top of one another. Gender mainstreaming is the reverse of that – it involves going back to its roots. If it is implemented it requires radical restructuring – that's a huge change for policy-making system... Ultimately where it can tie very usefully in is in the notion of the SMI – new notion of targets and performance in the civil service (R14, Q9 & 10, p. 5).

Look at how women perform when they leave college. Everybody explains it away by the fact that women are having children and so leave the workforce and so end up earning less and also because there is no childcare... What I want to know is that if those women have the same qualifications as men and don't have children and are still paid less, why are they paid less? When people say what about working class women I always say then that if we can't sort it out for women who are educated and middle class then how can we sort it out for badly off women?(R5, Q20, p. 4).

Training for Mainstreaming: the Impact of Feminist Knowledge on Mainstream Policy-Makers

As soon as he got the training he saw that it meant looking at policy from a whole difference perspective. So you see, awareness raising is very important. With some commitment awareness can really make a difference (R4, Q6, p. 2).

I didn't know anything till I went to a seminar in Santander in Spain in June. It was a European seminar, something to do with Spain's presidency (R20, Q1, p. 1).

Well yes, because GM is dealing with the male dominated institutions and the hardest thing is that it requires a change in attitude. Its not just like legislation; it actually requires a change in how people think. (R8, Q1, p. 3).

Can I confide in you? I have to say that the first two-day introductory meeting at Malahide was quite difficult. It was the initial introduction and it nearly put me off. This was before (names gender equality expert) started. (names gender equality expert)'s approach is very calm and decisive. An American woman, I can't remember who she was (but I can get you the stuff though), but she stood up at the

podium pounding on it telling us how we had to do this and that. It was terrifying. Now it was all women there but I remember thinking if there had been a male decision-maker he would have dismissed it saying 'these are all bra burners.' Strident feminists can put people off. Now that's my own personal impression but just to say that the language used was almost threatening. (R8, Q7, p. 8)

It's a combination of both sensitising and having to do it. You do have to make it accessible but with force behind it too. You don't want to make it too difficult for people but they have to know it will be done. (R8, Q8, p.8).

Horizontal Issues: gender is getting easier because at least you know what women are and money is there for training. You know what men and women are. Its not always easy to see how it affects things. For instance, in agriculture people will say that most farmers are men so it is not relevant. Of course there is a bigger question as to why most farmers are men, but at least its not as woolly as rural development or social inclusion. (R12, Q2, p. 2).

Initially I suppose you don't know what it means. People don't know what it means, and how are you going to do something if you don't know what it means. (names gender equality expert) is very good in that regard, she helped the Managing Authorities and gave practical advice.(R18, Q10, p. 3).

The other thing that they're supposed to do is think about equal opportunities and project selection. (R1, Q11, p. 5).

You are not preaching to the converted but you are preaching to people who are interested to hear about different things and best practice and they pick it up and then they will often do jobs for people in their own area persuading that this is not lunacy (R1, Q16, p. 8).

Gender mainstreaming is very conceptual and it is difficult to concretise it in any particular circumstance. You need very capable, bright and astute people to implement it. You cannot give something like gender mainstreaming to people who are already overworked, very busy, not interested and not very bright (R3, Q16, p. 5).

DEVIANT CASES

D1: Data plays a significant role in the implementation of gender mainstreaming.

Gender Statistics

...they (statistics) are very useful but they are not going to change anything. I could have statistics saying that I have 50% girls and 50% boys doing a subject but that doesn't tell me who's going to benefit. (R4, Q5a, p. 2).

In our department we luckily have a talented new statistician who understands these things. At the moment a scooping exercise is being done to get more from the data we have. We have lots of information that is just not published. When he has put it all together we'll publish it and invite experts to identify gaps (R4, Q9, p. 3).

Now there was a taskforce done on this and they showed that all the different data questions asked by everyone including revenue and social welfare questions. It's basically bureaucracy gone nuts! The CSO should be gathering all those stats. I can't understand why the DJELR aren't putting pressure on the CSO to gather these statistics. I know they hired their own statistician in the end, it was obviously easier

than getting the CSO to do it. As it is, the CSO is collecting very out of date statistics. That won't change the whole set up. (R6, Q23, p. 6).

A lot of women were working in the black economy, which was invisible because in those days even part-time work was a lot less visible. The breakdown of unemployment showed that there were many more men than women unemployed but that stood to reason because there were many more men than women in work in the first place. Across all member states they began to disaggregate into length of time unemployed and gender (R7, Q5, p. 2).

Take for example e-commerce. We are at the stage of writing programme complement and are working on proposals and we looked at this to find gender disaggregated data and a male/female percentage was put into the programme complement because (names gender equality expert) commented on it. But nobody is collecting that data as the programmes go along. With the household survey I am using proxy figures which we broke down but you can't actually get. (R12, Q4(a & b), p.2-3).

I think it's kind of like a big funnel. You know; you start off with data and then it narrows to get down to analysis and narrows again with what you can do and what you will do. I mean, you are talking about practically nothing. I mean I 'd be interested to see if you can see any real commitments at all in it. (R1, Q14, p.7).

That infrastructure OP has all the gender impact assessment forms at the back as an appendix. They can be very poor, but we've done quite a lot of work since they were filed in that area so they might be better now. As for the Peace Programme, it's a completely different administrative structure so it doesn't really apply because this is something done jointly between North and South, so what status does an Irish government decision have over the North? So they're not filled in for that area but loads of other things are happening there. Programme complements for the productive sector they were never filled in. There was an agreement between the Department of Justice and the Department of Enterprise Trade and Employment that they wouldn't be filled in for that one. (R1, Q15, p. 7).

GC: So you use statistics a good bit in your work then?

RES: Well, I use them to kind of lay out what's happening in any area. Now I'd use them an awful lot more if we had more of them. We don't have enough at all.(R1, Q31, p. 14).

I think they ar,e well, they are only part of a process; you wouldn't use them on their own... when the data isn't very good its not good to be using it, but its better than nothing(R1, Q34, p. 15).

Apparently loads of women don't take out loans, they just start off something in their kitchen so they could be far more entrepreneurial than men but its so small-scale that it doesn't get recorded anywhere. (R1, Q36, p. 15).

Disaggregated Data

When the Equal Pay legislation was brought in in the 1970s the IDA started gathering statistics about women and men. But then they were told (by the govt) that that was not in the spirit of the new legislation and that they should stop gathering statistics on gender (R6, Q2, p. 1).

Gender Equality Indicators

... the information is gathered, we take it up to the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and they can analyse this, establish why this is happening and take a different approach (R6, Q6, p. 2).

All we can do here at the moment is to try to collect some data and try to find out what is happening. Now I want them to know that we are open to this thing and that we want to do it but that it is just very hard. This is government policy and we have to do it. (R6, Q7, p. 2).

I would like to see good indicators developed if there was data available. (R8, Q4a, p. 6).

Gender mainstreaming is complex to apply. The whole issue of indicators that are specific enough to track things. Ireland is at the beginning of a process. The EU has attached a commitment to social indicators that track areas – progress on regulations. This is crucial to gender mainstreaming. Gives a better picture of hidden inequalities and progress. In performance management speak we feel there should be targets – achievable targets over specified time-scale accounted by indicators. This is integral to the gender mainstreaming approach even if they include crude targets at first – need to break it down. Can become intangible – them maybe can make it happen (R14, Q15, p. 7).

It's crucial to display that there is an inequality in an area. Because let's say something like women and transport. When we did earlier training on gender equality issues in transport, we always started off with, like, women are more reliant on public transport and have less access to private transport and we had people standing up saying things like well my wife can use the car any time she wants. That just meant that people got personally involved and then when we went out and got a survey done of adults in Ireland and their transport use then we saw that 40% of women have a driving licence and 60% of men and that was just completely unarguable with, completely unarguable so you need this data to show that there are gender equality differences and then once you have the data to show there are, you can start moving on to teaching people how to analyse the reasons behind these reasons or even they don't even need to analyse them, they can just look at that and say they are more reliant on public transport. You know so.(R1, Q31, p. 14).

The thing about the indicators is you've got to have your baseline information so you've got to have your baseline and then you have a target and as you reach the target then it indicates you're reaching it. Like, if you have no baseline then you don't have any targets so you get nowhere. (R1, Q32, p. 14).

Within a bureaucracy mainstreaming has these problems. You give people a target and mainstreaming causes it to have no effect. It removes the clear-cut target. In a bureaucracy you need a simple ruler that you can apply – it's a number. We are at too early a stage in Ireland. I mean we could announce mainstreaming when minds have changed, but we are not at that stage. We are still at the targeting stage (R9, Q8, p. 5).

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS: OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF GENDER INEQUALITY

And the transport census questions asks how do you get to school or work, again very male things, all outside the home all nothing to do with what women do and I mean, our survey found that both men and women went to the supermarket more

often than per week they went to work. People who didn't go to work would go to the shops everyday or every second day. So it does make sense. But the census doesn't ask that (R1, Q33, p. 14).

Gender Proofing: Programme Complement Texts

To be honest, I think a lot of the questionnaires we get are very poor at the moment. The instruments are not good, we need better instruments. At the moment, I can't give the information I want to give. They are not asking the right questions... The question will be something like 'How many boys/girls take advantage of the programme?' That's not enough; there needs to be some qualitative work done so that we can see how the programme is being used. The question should be how do boys/girls benefit? At the moment the questions are too technical so we are not really showing anything about the situation (R4, Q5, p. 2).

There is more of a focus on gender in this programme than in previous programmes. It is the first time we've had to consider gender, it was never in any programme previous to this. The problem is that we have nothing to base it on. We have no data and it's very hard to see if it's having an impact. Everything is put into the programme complement, that's how it works (R6, Q1, p. 1).

To be honest the GIA form doesn't work. We don't know the answers to those questions, but the DJELR went to government with it and now it's a statutory instrument. But we had bilateral meetings with Justice and managed to convince them of our dilemma and they agreed that we can't be responsible for what comes up through the system. And the CSO are unco-operative about it. I can't understand how DJELR can't get the CSO to be more helpful with statistics (R6, Q21, p. 6).

(names gender equality expert) has done an analysis of the programme complements – you should ask for a synthesis it for the NDP monitoring process. We set out to do certain things – we check up on things, it's really not much more than a ticking exercise. The government give high level commitments and follow them through (R10, Q14, p. 5).

We do a bit of that alright. We do more than we are forced to do to be honest. I can't understand why we are not given targets because then we could force it a bit. I talked to (names policy-maker) about this and she said they are putting targets through in pilot projects, but I want to know why they aren't in all projects. Something like all public sector organizations should have a 10% target of women by 2005 (R25, Q1, p. 3).

If the database is there and people have the supports to fill them out they're fine. But the GIA presupposes knowledge that isn't there. Are departments gathering information and then analysing it? What does that mean? Having a form and ticking boxes on it is not gender mainstreaming. We need targets. What is the balance in spend? What are the targeted numbers? The problem is that people don't know what they are trying to prove (R22, Q12, p. 6).

We tell them questions to ask but they don't know how to answer them at all. They don't know where to find the data, they don't know how to analyse it and they need to be told all that and that's what's needed more than models of what questions to ask.(R1, Q26, p. 13).

There isn't much implementation of it, basically. (R1, Q27, p.13).

The main thing they have to do is break down the indicators measuring progress by gender. For example; if they start off with 30 women being trained and 70 men and they've targeted 60 men and 40 women then they've got to report on those... The other thing that they're supposed to do is think about equal opportunities and project selection. (R1, Q10, p. 4)

And most of the gender impact assessment forms that were filled in were really supposed to gender proof policies, because they asked how many women and men are affected by this area of funding. Then they asked if there are differences, what factors can this be attributed to and then they asked what can be done about this and what will you do about it in your measure. So I was just going through them in the regional programmes and only 50% of them answered the first question which was how many men and women are affected in this area because they didn't know, and they just put down no data available and not applicable. So nothing. And then when you get down to the analysis of why what factors would lead to this difference I think it was 23% or 25% of them had something in there. Most of them were, like, you might find a few things there like there's more women in the workforce or something now. (R1, Q12, p. 6).

I think when people see gender proofing or a gender impact assessment form they think 'oh this is about women.' And then they try to think about something about women in this area, and usually the first thing they think of is employment because that is what is really been pushed. Because if you look you have changes in gender language in Ireland since the 1970s and actually every single one of these is related to employment except the first one working mothers, parental leave, two income families, home worker, equal pay; they're nearly all work and that's what everybody sees and we are trying to make them see that there's lots of other areas like transport or housing where there are gender impacts and employment is one thing in it. (R1, Q13, p. 6)

Sure, just think about those gender impact assessment forms. The analysis I did for the regional programmes, 50% of them had no data at all. So you'd be chopping out 50% of what's happening straight away. If you look at the economic and social infrastructure OP I think there's hardly any data, I don't think any of those forms have data, maybe one or two. (R1, Q37, p. 14).

GC: So I would get loads of blank answers...
RES: You'd get nothing back, nothing. Because the concept isn't even properly discussed, it's miles away from the stage of being measured. It's got to be discussed and accepted before it's properly measured. (R1, Q38, p. 15)

(R1, Q37, p. 15).

GIA – There is a little bit of fear with them though, because people are conscious of how many things they have to report on already. (R8, Q2, p. 4).

The pressure needs to be recurring and constant or we might forget all about it otherwise once the programme complements are done. It is only a matter of imagining things in a different way. I mean our mothers lived in a different world so things can change. (R8, Q 4b, p. 6)

The awareness raising done already has helped. The idea of proofing measures is to make sure that no one is left out. But rather than doing every measure it is better to accept certain measures. The effort involved is disproportionate to the impact on that

particular measure. It would be better to prioritize even if it is mainstreaming. (R12, Q7, p. 3)

We ducked out of most of them (GIA forms)... It probably does help to figure them out in some cases... There is a gender impact assessment form for a measure worth €3m and one for a measure worth €5bn. It's unfair because they are very very different. You can't have the same standard for two such different measures. (R12, Q8, p. 3)

Gender mainstreaming was different to the other three elements of the programme complement document because a problem and solution were identified. (R8, Q5, p. 7)

It's the same set of people constantly being asked to do things – data on gender, data on the regions, there is always more and more demands to collect different types of data. ...now just seen as another reporting requirement (R18, Q6, p.2).

GC: What is your role in the overall process?
R18: Issuing guidelines and reporting these things are issued twice a year and we are constantly being reminded of the need to report. On our technical assistance programme one measure is an IT system, which mainly gathers financial data and part of the information also is gender disaggregated data. This was a huge project. (R18, Q9, p. 3)

D2: Bureaucratic structures are important components of the mainstreaming process.

The Framework for Implementation: the National Development Plan

...the NDP is governed by structural funds regulations. If somebody is applying for structural funds they have to do a gender impact assessment (GIA) of the proposal, develop indicators and then monitor progress (R4, Q4, p. 1).

...if you go through OP to see how difficult it is to gender mainstreaming. It's really only measures that affect the individual that can be gender proofed. Things like research and development can't really be gender proofed. The focus you see of all the sub-measures in the Productive Sector OP is not gender. Its all industry based. But the Commission is co-funding the OP and you can't threaten to close down programmes supposed to be building industry if women aren't there (R6, Q15 & Q16, p. 4).

Look at Regional Networks here, now that is one where gender could be relevant. It involves linking up with HR on community enterprise – there is room there for local involvement and you could make sure it is women (R6, Q17, p. 5).

Our main focus here at the moment is gender mainstreaming through the NDP. Well (names gender equality expert)'s unit really has responsibility for that, and I won't say that my job is to keep an eye on her but just to say that she is here on contract so I am the PO in the division. I suppose if she did anything really crazy we'd be answerable as the permanent members of staff (R5, Q3, p. 1).

I suppose my real role is to provide a link between the unit and the NDP. The department proper then has responsibility for what happens in the Unit (R5, Q4, p. 1).

Well you see gender mainstreaming is in the NDP. So now that is a good bit of government activity and people do have to make sure that every memo sent to government has gender implications taken into account. There would have been resistance to gender mainstreaming in the Department of Finance of course (R5, Q8, p. 2).

A huge proportion of government activity is wrapped up in the NDP and so the fact gender mainstreaming is part of that means that it will probably spread. There are a lot of people working on the NDP and they all hear about gender mainstreaming. There is a level of education happening with people, when you think that a few months ago I didn't know what gender mainstreaming was (R5, Q11, p. 2).

Now gender mainstreaming is one of the criteria for getting funding under the National Development Plan and so people really have to do it. In the current NDP, regulations governing the Community Support Framework state that gender mainstreaming is obligatory. (R2, Q17, p. 4).

The big difference was that this time the funding was part of a strategic plan. Money with a plan is much better than just getting money (R2, Q21, p. 4).

The problem is that there are huge agendas at NDP monitoring committee meetings and equality issues were always shoved onto the end. Because we were always out of time at the end it meant that they were rushed so I got into a discussion with the department of finance and suggested the idea of an equal opportunities and social inclusion committee. This committee doesn't have any decision-making powers, it's an advisory committee to the CSF [Community Support Framework] which is the main committee for the NDP. Its purpose is to provide a space for attention to be paid to those issues... I know that a lot of people at that meeting think it's a load of rubbish (R2, Q27& 28, p. 5).

The national employment action plan came in during the course of the previous NDP. One pillar of that plan was equal opportunities. Gender was the main issue of the NEAP but I think it's been broadened now to include other forms of inequality. But the guidelines change every year, it started off with gender mainstreaming. You should talk to the DETE about that because they're in charge of it. (names policy-maker) should be able to tell you who to talk to. She has a great handle on employment issues (R2, Q33, p. 6).

From my perspective, gender mainstreaming really only appeared as an objective in 1999. There was resistance amongst policy-makers in the beginning because there was a feeling that it was too soon to start integrating gender, they thought there was a need for more positive action first (R7, Q6, p. 2).

We've had lots of gender mainstreaming courses and additional money invested through (names gender equality expert)'s unit. It is very important that that unit is part of the NDP. The NDP is a big important plan and it's good to have the NDP badge on the plan (R7, Q13, p. 4).

As regards mainstreaming I sit on the Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion committee. I have thought for a long number of years that monitoring committees are not decision-making committees, though the mid-term review does give some opportunities to make shifts in expenditure but we haven't got the evidence needed at

times... The problem is that you need to be an expert on transport to gender mainstream but experts on transport don't know about gender. You then need the gender experts to know about transport so you can't really be an expert on anything, you need to know about everything. You need to be both really (R16, Q21, p. 5).

In a sense the EU monitoring and evaluation regime has been applied to the whole NDP including those areas not financed by the EU. The basic system and the evaluation of the plan are governed by the EU structural fund regulations. That's an example of mainstreaming in a sense, I suppose (R21, Q1, p. 1).

Given that the whole objective is unclear, and the data is in its infancy and that the methodology is lacking it may make more sense to concentrate on specific areas and put in indicators in those areas (R21, Q11, p. 1).

What bedevils this process and particularly gender mainstreaming is that it is very unclear what that means in practice. The NDP has certain core goals – like continued economic growth – that are clear and these issues are tacked on at the side and it is not clear what their status is (R21, Q3, p. 2).

The Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion co-coordinating committee turns the spotlight on gender... it meets one day every 6 months. The horizontal issues are squeezed into a very small part of that committee and the only people there representing gender and equal opportunities are ourselves and the other Community and Social Pillar representatives and the gender equality unit... it is a great place to hold people to account. In practice the gender equality unit uses it to provide information and practical initiatives and departments with the will to change use that. Where departments just don't have that political will then nothing happens and the Co-coordinating Committee has no penalties power... other than criticism from the Chair at the co-coordinating and monitoring committee level – five minutes of embarrassment. That's a weakness of how gender mainstreaming is applied in Ireland (R14, Q3, p. 2).

They'll contact us if they need to. They wouldn't contact outside. We tell them what to do, we give them an idea of the kind of information we need. Gender is such a small part of the whole thing. Expenditure is the most important part – we have to make sure that they are spending the money. So all the measurements are based on what is spent. So if no money has been spent on a particular measure we will have no figures for that. It is impossible to count women's work on farms. We can only get information from TEAGASC because they have different schemes designed to specifically involve women. All we can do on other schemes is say how many males and females are participating. There's not much you can say on gender equality. The area bases were the only one's that were different. (R20, Q3, p. 3)

In the Equal Opportunities Co-coordinating Committee each OP has to report on what's happening on gender equality commitments in each measure and some of those reports will actually list what people have done on them. (R1, Q24, p. 11)

I think that the culture of policy-making, well particularly in Ireland, it's all about getting money for your department and then using that money to buy things like buses and roads and houses with no analysis of who would be, you know, who's going to use the stuff or how the money's going to be spent. I think it's very kind of like bread-winning and homemaker stuff. The policy-makers get all this dosh and they bring it back from the department and they never think about what happens

then. And I also think the focus on things and the focus on developing things and building things means that people aren't looked at all. So it's really really hard to insert any kind of proofing into a policy that doesn't look at how people are going to be affected by it as a starting point. (R1, Q18, p. 9)

I mean another thing that happens here is that people are generalists not specialists, so they don't actually know any issues at all in the area let alone the gender equality issues and of course they don't want to admit that they don't know the issues in the area because they're supposed to be responsible for this... we've got a lot of very bright people working on it so they come into a new area and they know nothing about it, so they work their ass off for 6 months and then they start getting a very good grasp of it and they know what's happening and they're able to make good decisions. (R1, Q19, p. 9)

Again very male, very territorial, each department has its own turf and you never ever walk on somebody else's turf never, ever. You've got to check with them if you can do it... it's very, very hard to move something because again it's not seeing the people. It's not seeing the person and who deals with them, it's just kind of top down, separate departments. (R1, Q21, p. 10)

When you are designing your policy or your training centre you don't think about that and there is integration, I think, at top levels of departments but when it comes down to implementation and delivery of individual things there isn't good integration as far as I can see. (R1, Q22, p. 10)

The whole idea is that this thing is equal opportunities based. When you go to implementing agencies and measures – how do we decide what to give money to and have to meet requirements of equality legislation. We are mindful of it. Each managing authority has its own monitoring committee and social partners are on that (R18, Q11, p. 3).

The structural difficulty is that there is a very congested agenda. It is very hard to get into information swapping. (R11, Q6, p. 4).

The roles of departments regarding legislation is to produce workable legislation and design it. (R11,Q7, p. 4).

As far as gender mainstreaming is concerned we work through the programme complements, harassing departments to try to put things into programme complements. We are the middle man trying to drive things (R12, Q1, p.2).

There are some goodwill indicators but for example, if you look at a measure on the regional airports it is no good counting how many men and women use it because you can't design a programme to change the way these programmes are run when you are giving small money for lights and things like that... (R12, Q5, p.3).

Part of the NDP monitoring committee's brief is to check on all the horizontal issues – environment, rural and poverty proofing throughout the OP's and the community initiatives. Sub-committees of the NDP – we call them co-ordinating committees – one for each horizontal issue and the one for gender mainstreaming is Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating which also meets twice a year about 5 weeks before the NDP/CSF meeting. There are representatives from the social partners, managing authorities and communication on it as well (R18, Q1, p. 1).

We have a very good information officer who gives me the figures and I just change them around according to requirements. We do keep a track on programmes from a gender point of view (R17,Q3, p. 3).

Technical Assistance: the Gender Equality Unit

I have to say that (names gender equality expert) has been very helpful. She is very hands on and I think that it's a very good idea to put a unit dedicated to gender in one department to provide help. It happens that it is in Justice but wherever it was it makes a difference to be able to ring up and ask about what a particular requirement means or for help in trying to assess a sub-measure for gender. When I am feeding things back to agencies like the IDA or Enterprise Ireland it makes a difference to be able to introduce them to (names gender equality expert) and have her help them to look at their work from that outlook. She has a lot of input on committees, she's kind of a watchdog over there (R6, Q9, p. 3).

(names gender equality expert) immediately saw that the female representation on the committee was only 19% and its supposed to be 40%...I had to take some of my membership and negotiate with them to step down from the committee to be replaced with women. It was difficult, but I got them to agree...Then I wrote to all the implementing departments reminding them that they had to have more women. I have managed to bring the female membership of the monitoring committee up to 31%. ..As far as I am concerned the government made a commitment to include more females so it has to be done. (R6, Q10, p. 3)

Also another example is that TEAGASC did some research about staff and it was (names gender equality expert) who noticed that a lot of the temporary jobs were filled by women. Now it turned out when we looked into it that the women were only applying for the temporary jobs, that is what they wanted, but at first glance it seemed that all the men were being given the permanent jobs, but in fact the women didn't want them (R6, Q4, p.1).

Its all about changing people's attitudes. But I think it is important to have the back up expertise in (names gender equality expert)'s unit. I get really annoyed with the rural proofing people who will sit in a committee and not be able to define a rural area but still expect me to rural proof policy (R6, Q13, p. 4).

Well the first thing I would do is go and speak to (inserts name of gender equality expert) a lot earlier. In negotiation for NAPS and our preparatory work we would do it a lot earlier and maybe write it into the terms of reference of the working groups or something like that (R19, Q4, p. 2).

The reason why there has been some progress on gender is because of (names gender equality expert)'s unit. They've made some steps because there has been some training (R19, Q15, p. 6).

I thought I would actually be involved in changing policies but most of what I am doing is awareness raising. I sometimes think I should be called the communications and marketing expert. (R1, Q39, p. 16)

Because of the availability of the gender mainstreaming unit we have a clear contact point.(R12, Q3, p.2).

Because they would have misgivings about telling people (other policy-makers) what to do. You can get a bad reputation... They didn't like the idea of somebody telling them they were not doing things right but still not telling them what they should do. So then we got (names gender equality expert)-(names gender equality expert)'s unit set up and gave it the backing of a government department by putting it in DJELR. But there was still a lot of resistance. (R15, Q3, p.1)

(names gender equality expert) has made a difference because she advised some of the Managing Authorities on how to gender proof some of the measures before the OP's were complete. They have an advisory, information giving and reviewing role and to keep up to date on the whole area. They also offer advice on implementation (R18, Q2, p.1).

Bureaucratic Resistance

Structures are established and are highly resistant to change. One of the problems we have in the civil service is that the system we have was established in England in the 1600's and it hasn't really changed... Institutions are there to record the decisions of government... You are asking institutions in that role to take on a much wider management function... They will say that they will do it but in truth they don't have the institutional power to do it (R9, Q12, p. 6).

if you want roads built and the department doesn't want to do it then you set up an agency. Part of that is an attitude, we just don't want to be bothered because our job is to record other people's decisions not to build roads and things like that. In a way it's understandable that happens. So if you have a system that operates like that and you have a policy like gender that cuts across all these areas you actually don't really have the means to implement the policy. If the trend is to set up an agency to build a road then something like gender is definitely not going to be done within this system (R9, Q13, p, 7).

I don't think it's going to happen in Ireland because of the legal, social and attitudinal context. I mean you could do it, you could announce it but it's hard to make it happen, I think it would lose its bite within the system. Talking about government departments makes you think, how would you do it? I don't know how it would work – would they have to consider gender as part of every policy they implement? They could do it but I don't know how you would know whether it was effective (R9, Q15, p. 7).

To some extent GM is running before you can walk and it's testing the water... But once you start piloting the idea you can show that there is a demand. So there is a need for basic research initially, you build up a needs analysis and then this becomes a mainstreaming policy... There has been a tendency in the civil service to reply to the question 'Why do you do it that way?' 'Because we have always done it that way...' But I think that is changing and things like mainstreaming are making people change their whole approach to work (R7, Q17 & 18, p. 5).

D3: Ideological Issues

Economic Priorities

How is the IDA – who is supposed to be considering gender in everything – how can the company be attracted and then be competitive if it is in a technology industry and they have to recruit 40% female workplace (R6, Q5, p. 2).

...well I suppose it depends on where you are starting from. If your expectation is for gender equality then you will probably be disappointed, and if not disappointed you

probably won't live long enough to see its impact. On its own it's hard to see how it would have an impact at ground level. Gender mainstreaming is part of government policy, but there is a lot more activity in an economy other than the NDP or government policy that will never be touched by gender mainstreaming (R5, Q17, p. 3).

My conclusion is that Ireland doesn't have the conditions for gender mainstreaming yet. We need to change our emphasis. People don't understand gender mainstreaming and don't want to do it and not be pushed. We need more emphasis on positive action in the short-term. We need to do gender mainstreaming where we can – in the NDP...if the fence is so high that people don't understand the language but not serving women well then we need to strengthen it with more positive action... In important ways it is measurable – you can look at beneficiaries and users. Gender mainstreaming has to piggy-back more on other areas (R10, Q8, p. 4).

There is immense conservatism institutionally in Ireland – and leaders are more conservative than people even realise. That's why I believe equality is not a priority until external forces push it and they will struggle against it until they have to do something legally. That's why it's important to have legal backup. If you put down on paper that people cannot be discriminated against then people will take cases against when they realise they are being discriminated against. Some cases are won, some lost and gradually the pressure of law alters people's attitudes. If you produce legislation it may take 10 years but change will occur (R9, Q11, p. 6).

I still think myself that the problem with gender mainstreaming is that it is an issue for every programme – across the board. I suppose it could be because of my background as an economist but in my experience you are better off focusing on a number of priority areas (R21, Q10, p. 4).

Everything is done on an economic basis and if you have that approach social policy is always an add-on. Everything is decided on the basis of how much it costs. It's difficult to offer the same obvious measurement of social issues. People need to have the technical capacity to deal with these kind of things, you need to give them that if you want them to change how they work (R19, Q6, p. 3).

...in different countries there's different reasons why it's adopted. In some of the European countries where there aren't many women in the labour force it's seen as a way of getting women into the labour force, which a lot of governments want to do because it raises GDP and income. Then in some other countries it's being done to support women in the labour force because they realise that they have different needs to men that weren't taken care of by policy-makers. Then maybe in some countries it's just done for very high minded principles that it's fair and egalitarian to look at outcomes for different groups of people in your policies. So there's loads of different reasons I think why its being adopted. (R1, Q4, p. 1)

From the gender mainstreaming point of view I suppose it's really about getting people into the workforce – but you have to start somewhere. Very few organisations work on an altruistic basis. The labour supply is what motivates the industry. (R17, Q2, p. 3)

Market forces will cause more of it. When you have an imbalance of representation in the labour force and as soon as that is balanced the problems of gender mainstreaming will be minimised. That is nothing to do with the philosophical reasons for gender mainstreaming – liable to have a more lasting effect. (R17, Q6, p. 5)

D4: Childcare is an issue that has been 'mainstreamed' without the use of gender mainstreaming.

But the truth is that you can't do something without money. I identify childcare as a good example of this problem. It is definitely an obstacle to equality. When I started there was some money available through FAS and Education, but it was not being spent. The EU were complaining about this. We had a small childcare pilot project going and availed of mid term review under the Structural Funds. We applied for and were awarded 1m ECU from the structural funds for child care. This got us into the structural funds for equality, we grasped that issue [child care] and then we were able to become a player for EU funds and some Luas money, then. The thing is that if the money can't be spent and redistributed in time it's lost. So we spent and redistributed 7m ECU in the short time framework [approx 6 months]. We got the money before we knew what we would do with it, but we knew that the national voluntary childcare organisations always had lots of plans but no money, so we asked them to apply for funding this guaranteed that we would spend the money on time. So basically with childcare, we managed to get in on the plan before the current NDP, that meant that we were at the negotiations for the next NDP, so we got funding for social inclusion because we were part of justice and equality money because we were the equality department (R2, Q20. p. 4).

For instance childcare is not a social inclusion issue, so some people say it should be part of social welfare. I see it as a universal issue for everyone. That's the danger of seeing it on the margins – it's not the same for very well-off women. The reason social inclusion and equality are part of the same committee is because we have so many committees in here (R2, Q30 & 31, p. 5).

FAS has now delivered a childcare budget for trainees – that's really big progress. Can you attribute that to gender mainstreaming or to labour market supply issues? It is significant that only kicked in after gender mainstreaming kicked in. It's a combination of all influences – people had to go through gender progress. It was endorsed and decided (R10, Q21, p. 8).

You have to see it as a continuum. There were big developments in the 1970s but very little in the 1980s maybe because of economic circumstances. I would have expected childcare to follow through. Why was there no follow through on that? Why wasn't it a proper issue even in the last election campaign? I thought this issue was cracked. We used to get calls from men when I was at the EEA saying that childcare was costing more than the mortgage. If that isn't driving childcare, what will? We now have research showing the need for childcare, but it wasn't an issue on the doorsteps in this election and I can't explain why (R10, Q5, p. 3).

Ireland has been consistently criticized for having a weak childcare infrastructure (R7, Q9, p. 3).

Now we are also involved with the BMW and S & E OP's – we are involved with them under the social inclusion remit. Particularly with responsibility for childcare. We part-fund the staff training and development cost on childcare... We see childcare as an equality issue but from our perspective in labour force development it is a very important consideration... In terms of labour market supply childcare is a really important issue. I mean we have very low UE now and that makes supply even more important – we have a skills gap that we are trying to fill. Of course we are trying to completely eliminate UE and that takes time because the high unit cost in reducing long-term UE because of total re-training etc (R7, Q2, p. 1).

The government have put aside €560m to fund regulated childcare. We are interested in the idea of social capital and there are fewer and fewer voluntary childcare providers. When the childcare programme was getting up and running there were lots of voluntary providers but now they are disappearing under regulation. This is raising the unavoidable question for the government that they may have to consider statutory provision of childcare (R22, Q16, p. 8).

The main things at the moment are racism and bisexual rights and of course childcare (R16, Q2, p. 1).

As soon as you start talking to women about the gender pay gap, they will start talking about childcare (R16, Q3, p. 1).

The main thing about childcare is the cost of it. We did a survey on childcare in order to establish how much people were actually paying for it. The government only count the formal sector, but in fact, we found that most of our members were using the informal sector. Even still it costs a lot. Its difficult to say exactly how much people are paying during the week but taking all the different possible hours and numbers of children into account you are probably looking at about €150 per week... It's very significant because when you look at the equal pay legislation, and we were always concentrating on equal pay, you see that in fact maybe women had not sought promotion or had dropped back their hours because of childcare problems (R16, Q4 & 5, p. 2).

Look, if you were self-employed and employed a secretary to work for you wouldn't pay any tax on her pay. But if you employed the same person to look after your children you would pay tax on it in that you have to pay childcare out of your take home pay. You get no tax back on it... there is no sense of public outrage and there should be, but there is private outrage about it (R16, Q6, p. 2).

The problem is that the government were not aware that participants on Community Employment Schemes are actually responsible for delivering the National Childcare Strategy. If you were to pay the Community Employment Schemes it would not be effective. They were only looking at the figures from the perspective of the active labour market policy and you can't look at it only in that narrow sense. I know that's not really a gender example but... (R16, Q26, p. 7)

Look at childcare for instance... To some extent policies have their time now. It's hard to argue that childcare isn't a real need. From the 1980s and 1990s it became apparent that working mothers were having difficulties. You see the thing is you can't do policy based on logic, you have to do it according to needs (R3, Q14, p. 5).

DJELR are good at making the most of us as a kind of external non-lobby. The Equality for Women measure is very small – the total spend is €23m on 31 projects, each getting small amounts – a few €100,000 each. Childcare is over €100m between 2000-2006. For training and staffing support about €200m. €56bn for the Southern and Eastern regional assembly. (R12, Q11, p. 4)

We would have just put in a proposal at budget time. That's what people do, departments put in proposals at budget time for projects and we would have put in a suggestion for childcare funding and Mervyn Taylor liked the idea and so we could get going with it... The thing with childcare is that people had started to notice it as a problem (R3, Q4, p. 2).

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Gender Impact Assessment Forms to be completed at Programming Complement stage

Programming Complement _____

Measure/Project _____

Step One: Outline the current position of men and women in the area which this expenditure activity will address.

Who are the current beneficiaries of this area of expenditure activity? (Beneficiaries include users of the facility, or participants)
.....
.....

How many are women?..... How many are men?.....

What data source did you use to determine these figures?.....

.....

The Equal Opportunities Promotion and Monitoring Unit will assist on data sources.

Step Two: What factors lead to women and men being affected differentially in the area being addressed by this expenditure activity?

Identify the factors which lead to the differential impact on women and men.

a).....

.....

b).....

.....

c).....

.....

d).....

.....

Step Three : How can the factors which lead to women or men being affected differentially be addressed and changed?

How can the policy proposal/measure respond to the factors identified in Step 2 above?

a).....

.....

b).....

.....

c).....

.....

d).....

.....

Where considered appropriate, what actions do you propose in this regard?

a).....

.....

b).....

.....

c).....

.....

d).....

.....

Gender Impact Assessment Forms to be completed at Programming Complement stage - example of completed form

Programming Complement _____ *Border Midland & West Operational Programme*

Measure/Project ____ *Local Enterprise Priority – Tourism - Marine Tourism* ___

Step One: Outline the current position of men and women in the area which this expenditure activity will address.

Who are the current beneficiaries of this area of expenditure activity? (Beneficiaries include users of the facility, or participants)
The marine leisure sector encompasses not only the active pursuits such as watersports, boating, and angling but also passive pursuits such as visits to beaches, swimming in the sea, coastal touring, pleasure boats and cruising, nature tourism, aquaria, maritime museums etc.
How many are women?..... How many are men?.....

A 1996 ESRI survey suggested that 57% of males and 54% of females participate in some marine leisure activity, but participation is higher for males in all activities, except for trips to the beach, and is significantly higher in the areas of angling and water sports.
What data source did you use to determine these figures?.....*1996 ESRI survey*.....

Step Two: What factors lead to women and men being affected differentially in the area being addressed by this expenditure activity?

Identify the factors which lead to the differential impact on women and men.

a).. *See Step Three below* .....

.....

b).....

.....

c).....

.....

d).....

.....

Step Three : How can the factors which lead to women or men being affected differentially be addressed and changed?

How can the policy proposal/measure respond to the factors identified in Step 2 above?

See below.....

b).....

.....

c).....

.....

d).....

.....

Where considered appropriate, what actions do you propose in this regard?

To promote greater equality of opportunity, the measure will

a) encompass passive as well as active water-based activities

b). in its application forms, request a paragraph on gender impact and targeted employment/participation figures on a gender disaggregated basis

c) *in its scoring system, give a high weighting to the provision of facilities for female and family participation, and to community partnership projects*

d) *include a representative of women's and community groups on the Project Assessment Committee*

e.. take gender representation into account in membership of the Project Assessment Committee