

**Report of the Meeting ATHENA II – 3B**  
**11 – 12 March 2005**  
**Nijmegen (Ravenstein)**

“Reconceptualizing the Notion of Equal Opportunities and  
Rethinking the Policy Aims and Instruments – a Joint Effort of  
Women’s (Gender) Studies in the Academia (research and training),  
Policy Makers and Women’s Organizations”

**Project Coordinators:**

Martha Franken, Sonja Spee, Chris Zwaenepoel

**Organisation of the meeting in Nijmegen :**

Claudia Krops

**Report of the meeting :**

Katrien Lefever

**Agenda:**

1. On March 12th : seminar at the Radboud University Nijmegen ...
2. On March 12th : SWOT analysis of country reports for the countries that participate today; practical arrangements for the further project planning for 3B

**Proceedings on March 11th**

The seminar was set up around 3 major themes in Equal Opportunities Policies :

- the Evolution of Equal Opportunities Policies on Supernational/ Transnational Level
- The Assessment of Equal Opportunities Policies
- Work and Care

The presentations were followed by interesting discussions on the themes :

- Anna van der Vleuten : Snail or Snake ? Shifts in the Domain of EU Gender Equality Policies;
- Alison Woodward : The Role of Transnational Social Movements and Organisations in the Renewal of Equal Opportunities Policies
- Annie Hondeghem : The Organisation of Equal Opportunities Policies in Flanders, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom
- Monique Leijenaar : An Evaluation of Dutch Policymaking Concerning the Political Empowerment of Women
- Inge Bleijenbergh : European Social Citizenship between Work and Care
- Barbara Bagilhole : The New Socially Excluded : British Family Friendly Employment Policies and Childfree Employies.

The Slides and papers of these presentations can be found on the website of the 3B project : [www.rosadoc.be](http://www.rosadoc.be)

### **Proceedings March 12th:**

#### **Participants :**

Barbara Bagilhole, Els Flour, Mervi Heikkinen, Katrien Lefever, Inge Vanderstighelen, Rosa Erlingsdottir, Claudia Krops, Martha Franken, Sonja Spee, Alessandra Vincenti, Giovanna Vingelli, Mieke Verloo, Chris Zwaenepoel

#### **Agenda:**

1. Introduction – presentation of new members and state of affairs of the project 3B
2. SWOT analysis of the countries' equal opportunities policies
3. Practical agreements on the further project planning (expertdatabase, the pamphlets, the evaluation criteria for papers, inventory on education)

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### **1. Introduction – presentation of new members and state of affairs of the project 3B**

#### State of affairs of the project 3B – by Martha Franken.

An overview of the main principles of the project was given: aims of the project, working methods, products of the project, participants and Velvet Triangle, involved countries.

Preliminary activities and results of the first year were discussed: 30 discussion papers that need to be clustered, Progress available at website [www.rosadoc.be](http://www.rosadoc.be), Expertdatabase ([www.rosadoc.be](http://www.rosadoc.be)), Digma database Amazone for mainstreaming instruments ([www.amazone.be](http://www.amazone.be)).

The activities of the second year:

- Seminar + meeting in Nijmegen - March
- Seminar + meeting + Athena meeting in Barcelona - May.

Overview of the results of the second year:

- 36 discussion papers – so only 6 papers since Helsinki?
- Progress available at website [www.rosadoc.be](http://www.rosadoc.be)
- Expertdatabase started ([www.rosadoc.be](http://www.rosadoc.be))

- Digma database Amazone for mainstreaming instruments ([www.amazone.be](http://www.amazone.be)).

Tasks to work on during the second year:

- Little progress in inventory and evaluation of policy tools and instruments
- Inventory of best practices of training possibilities
- Development of new policy recommendations and tools

Round-up: Presentation of new members + new products since Helsinki

Rosa Erlingsdottir :

- Involved in big European project: Well-known: From Welfare to Know fare. See also the project website: <http://www.bifrost.is/wellknow>
- 2-3 new papers in English. One from Erlingsdóttir and then more Publications from other participants from the University of Iceland.

Mervi Heikkinen

- Publication about obstacles mainstreaming good practices

Inge Vanderstighelen

- Thematic file on Beijing

Els Flour

- DIGMA: 6 new instruments
- New topic in the database: gender budgeting

Claudia Krops

- Organisation of this seminar
- Publication of Helsinki paper of Mieke Verloo on the website

Mieke Verloo

- MAGEECQ project: end of 2005: final report
- Beijing 10+ : Progress report

Chris Zwaenepoel

- Member of the Coordination team
- Website at [www.rosadoc.be](http://www.rosadoc.be)
- Expert database

Giovanna Vingelli

- Has finished PhD on gender budgetting: there is a book in Italian, but by the end of the year she will make a summary in English

Alessandra Vincenti

- Themes: Change of semantics in equal opportunities, Relation law-divorce-gender
- She will write a paper in English

Barbara Bagilhole

- Paper – see presentation 11/03/05
- Yearbook on state of Women Studies in 6 countries
- Women and science and technology - papers
- Big research project: Engineering curriculum at universities + how this influences women, Impact of EU funded training courses for women, Women and leadership

Sonja Spee

- Member of Coordination team
- Critical assessment of gender mainstreaming, Policy recommendations

- Planned: follow-up of network analysis of Alison Woodward
- Target groups of equal opportunities policies: who is included/who not
- Rethorics on equal opportunities

Katrien Lefever

- Supporting the coordination team
- Instrument for gender assessment of television programs (MEER)

Martha Franken

- Coordinator of the project
- Content work

*As it was not clear at the beginning of the meeting where we stand since Helsinki we made thus round up of activities of the different participants in Nijmegen. All members of working group 3b are asked to send us their state of affairs before we meet in Barcelona : new papers, publications, research started, research finished ...*

## 2. SWOT analysis of the countries' equal opportunities policies

Members of every country presented a SWOT-analysis based on the country report of their country (Responses to the Questionnaire on Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action – <http://www.unece.org/oes/gender/questionnaire.html>)

Countries for which a SWOT-analysis was presented and discussed:

- Belgium
- UK
- Iceland
- Finland
- Netherlands
- Italy

In this report we do not go into detail of what was shown and the discussions thereafter. For each of these countries, the electronic versions of the presentations or swot inputs will be collected and placed on the Athena 3B website: (<http://www.rosadoc.be/site/maineng/athena.htm>).

In the discussions with every SWOT we discovered that the exercise has proved to be very fruitful and therefore will be continued in Barcelona.

Some Concluding remarks on the SWOT-analysis:

- All participants brought in original ideas about how to tackle this exercise. Therefore we reached a high-level analysis in the total of the discussions, which was inspiring for the members of the working group.
- The SWOT analysis of the different country reports was a shock to most researchers present. We decided that this working group creates a forum for constructive criticism on equal opportunities policies, which is unique.
- In order to continue the exercise, we will spend time of the group sessions in Barcelona to make analysis of other country reports. In order to do that the project coordination will produce new instructions to refine the format for the analysis. In that way the results of the different countries can be compared with each other.
- All participants (also those that attended the meeting in Nijmegen) are asked to make the SWOT analysis of their country report conform the new instructions. Participants in 3b that did not yet make a SWOT analysis of their country report are asked to prepare a 15 minute presentation for the workshop in Barcelona.
- The new instructions will be sent to all participants in a separate document.
- We try to take the 'shadowreports' made up by ngo's into account for the SWOT (so we use two sources : the official country report and the shadowreports – both can be found on the unece website : <http://www.unece.org/oes/gender/questionnaire.html>)
- we will continue with this exercise in order to discover common characteristics in the working or failing of strategies, instruments or tools..

### **3. Practical agreements on the further project planning**

#### 1) Barcelona program:

In the Athena meeting in Barcelona our working group will organise 1 plenary session on Friday morning May 27th. We propose to handle the theme of conservatism and the “backlash”. The title is (Re)thinking Equality and Equal Opportunities in a wider but more conservative Europe. So far we have an agreement from Andrea Peto, Marina Calloni and Martha Franken of our working group to give presentations in the plenary sessions. Participants of 3B that have new ideas or proposals for the plenary are asked to mail these as soon as possible to the coordination team.

There will also be 3 sessions for the working group: we suggest 3 topics for the discussions. Depending on the amount of countries that will give an input for the SWOT more or less time will be devoted for this topic.

- SWOT analysis continuation
- Pamphlets or other products of 3B
- planning year 3

#### 2) Products :

In the project description of 3B the following products are stated. We should produce with all participants :

- A Think tank : we can conclude that the different seminars and meetings of the working group serve as a think tank. However common agreements still need to be pursued.
- Papers : we need more papers from the participants. All members of 3B are urged to deliver papers on the domains or themes of the working group. In the meeting a proposal for the assessment of papers is handed out : the document ‘Criteria for papers’ is agreed upon – participants are asked to comment on this document. We received no further comments on the Criteria.
- Pamphlets : this is a possible new product that was agreed upon in Helsinki. 5 themes were put forward in Helsinki, but we need coordinators for each pamphlet – so the 5 themes is too much, given that the project deadline is October 2006! We only have one year left to finish our products.

The coordinators propose the following topics for pamphlets :

- Pamphlet on education: inventory of best practices and training possibilities (Andrea Peto is coordinator)
- Pamphlet on backlash with inputs of different countries of SWOT-analysis
- Pamphlet on insitutional mechanisms --> can include lots of things

A discussion about the Pamphlets and what they should be like is held :

Remarks:

- too much in 1 pamphlet is not good – we need a focus
- pamphlet = more popular, not too academic
- pamphlets at least on the website, maybe also real booklet
- criteria are important + whom are you addressing?
- A pamphlet should contain a clear message. Are we certain about the message ?

After the discussion we feel like producing pamphlets on top of the other products that are promised might be too much. Participants are asked to send comments on these ideas, before the Barcelona meeting to [athena3b@rosadoc.be](mailto:athena3b@rosadoc.be)

- Inventory of the training possibilities: pamphlet on education/database – to be decided. A proposal for the questionnaire, made by Andrea Peto, was handed out to the participants of this meeting. Everybody should mail their comments on this proposal to Martha/Sonja within a week (before 18/3). The final version of this inventorysheet will be an annex to this report.
- We have to make Policy Recommendations – for ex.: SWOT-analysis: how to increase opportunities and how to decrease the threats. Every Swot-analysis should end with recommendations!

- The databases :

Website ([www.rosadoc.be](http://www.rosadoc.be) → English → European Projects → Athena)

Presentation: What is Athena 3B

Expertdatabase: people can fill it in online + send cv and picture

Criteria:

- for gender studies: be active, write articles/books
- for policy makers: responsible for a country/region, public civil servants
- for women organisations: chair persons of organisations
- Participants should make the responsible people in their country fill in the database.
- Digma database:
  - 10 updates – no responses from people of this working group!!!
  - gender budgetting is now included
  - inventory on tools/instruments → can Digma be extended into a broader database than mainstreaming ?