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„Gender Mainstreaming: a Success or a Failure in promoting Gender Equality in the European Union? "

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Introduction

The goal of equality between women and men and the promotion of women' rights are formally enshrined in various international conventions and commitments. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the third Millennium Development Goal (MDGs) – all reach for the same goal- women's emancipation. The development of women's rights in Europe is strongly influenced by European Union policies and law. However, most of the feminists highlight the limitations of EU in achieving equality in legal system, which is dominantly struggling to maximize the economic gains of its member states (Guerrina 2002:49). Rather than stimulating the social change, the European Union creates an athmosphere of formal gender equality by implementing various policies, which not only make little change in women's emancipation, but also reproduce the hegemonic power of economic interests of European Union. Rather than rethinking it's aims from gender perspective, gender mainstreaming policies just integrate gender issues into decision-making, but does not play a significant role in transforming the hierarchic social order.

The concept of gender mainstreaming is not only limited in its capacity to change social order and aim for emancipation instead of serving interests of the EU, it also has some drawbacks in recognizing the relation between gender and other sources of oppression like race or class. In addition, gender mainstreaming aims for emancipation of ‚women', but does not recognize the different socio-historical experiences, goals and values of women from different regions in Europe.

The article aims to answer the question whether the adoption of gender mainstreaming policies have brought more emancipation for women in the European Union by critically assessing the values and aims enshrined in some of the most controversial European equal opportunity policies and reflect the limitations, which they experience in providing women's emancipation. The article gives some critical input for the discussion of European Europe as an institution, stimulating women's emancipation in Europe.

Gender equality and gender mainstreaming

The visibility of the European Union's commitment to the issue of gender equality has risen considerably since establishment of The Treaty of Rome, signed by six countries in 1957. The Treaty of Rome is particularly relevant to the right to non-discrimination and equality through Article 119, which ensured the principle of equal pay for equal work between men and women in employment. Some argue, that the application of the equal pay offer formally and legally existed, but no concrete implementation in the Member States until the mid-1970s was achieved (Berghahn 2001).

In the past decades, the European Union has embraced a new broader agenda for equal opportunities between men and women. In contrast with the Union's traditional focus on equal pay and equal treatment in the workplace, which only touched the „women question", this new agenda also included specific actions on behalf of gender, as well as a new responsibility to 'mainstream' gender issues. The Treaty of Amsterdam, signed in 1997, marked the beginning of a new stage in the development of gender equality policy in the EU. The concept of gender mainstreaming calls for the systematic inclusion of gender issues throughout various governmental policies and and may be applied in various institutions. It also seeks to guarantee that every part of an organization or national policy machinery assumes responsibility for ensuring that policies impact evenly on women and men (Benschop, Verloo 2006).

It is important to stress, that there is no single definition or concept of gender mainstreaming. Depending on how we define it, the importance as well as it's relevance in promoting gender equality, varies. Council of Europe, for example, conceptualizes gender mainstreaming as a process of changing policy routines where the objects of mainstreaming are all policies, at all levels and at all stages of the programming cycle, while the active subjects are the ordinary actors (Debusscher 2011): „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 the actors normally involved in policy-making."(Council of Europe,1998: 13). Other, more transformative definitions of gender mainstreaing, stress that „mainstreaming entails a paradigm shift in thinking and requires being able to see the ways in which current practice is gendered in its construction despite appearing gender neutral" (Rees, 1998: 194). Debusscher (2011) claims, that gender mainstrreaing as a paradigm shift involves „a transformation of society by naming and challenging the existing gender- and power relations through policy interventions wherein formerly disempowered women, or their organisations participate in questioning, analysing and acting upon the gendered world". The concept of gender mainstreaming as an access of women 'to shape the objectives, priorities and strategies of development' (Debusscher 2011), implies the „transformation and reorientation of existing policy paradigms, changing decision-making processes, prioritizing gender equality objectives and rethinking policy ends." (Walby, 2005: 323).

The gender issue of gender mainstreaming

The problem of the term of gender mainstreaming model in promoting gender equality in Europe, is that it reduces the gender aspect of gender mainstreaming to only women's and man's issues and shifts the LBGT people's claims in the background. Eveline Bacchi and Binns (2009) stress a tendency in gender mainstreaming to portray gender as fixed oppositional categories of 'men' and 'women', a theoretical stance that they perceive as denying the complex ways in which power and privilege circulate. On the other hand, what regards LGBT single issue policies themselves, these are very recent, in the early stages of being implemented and have been applied unevenly across the EU member states (Coll-Planas, 2011). Homosexuality and transsexuality are relevant for people of various gender identities- the question of gender

in gender mainstreaming not only affects one specific and definable social group (women/men), but rather has to do with how society as a whole copes with sexuality and gender. This opens up the possibility of adopting a relational perspective, pointing out that heterosexuality is constructed in relation to homosexuality (and vice versa) and transsexuality in relation to cisgender. An action which affects the lives of LGBT people cannot be taken as if they were separate or removed from the lives of heterosexual/ cisgender people and the concept of gender mainstreaming should be open to not only women's and men's issues, but also of the one's who have different gender identities.

This article aims to answer the question whether the concept of gender mainstreaming is a success or rather a failure in promoting gender equality. Despite the discussed problematic of the gender issue in the concept of gender maisntreaming, it is beyond the scope of this article to analyze gender mainstreaming as an emancipatric project from the perspective of various gender identities. It will rather focus more on women's issues in the struggle for emanzipation without reducing gender to only men's and women's issue.

The concept of gender mainstreaming is widely discussed by feminists of different attitudes. Some may say that gender mainstreaming is one of the most effective means to support gender equality, women's empowerment as well as integrate women's and men's concerns and experiences into policy-making. Others claim, that it is a hegemonic rather than emanzipatoric project of the EU, which aims to implement the interests of the dominating social group rather than promote equal rights, some argue that mainstreaming is a masculine concept, putting female individuals in the labour and life frameworks, based on masculine standards. In the next part of the article I argue, that the gender mainstreaming framework serves the economic goals of the European Union rather than feminist struggle for gender equality. In addition, gender mainstreaming prevents the mass, bottom-up initiatives for social change. I will use the theory of hegemony, developed by Antonio Gramsci, to support my claim.

Gender Mainstreaming: a hegemonic rather than emancipatoric project of the EU?

Gender mainstreaming framework was formulated as a bottom-up concept, meaning that actors, related with the issue, participate in decision-making process in a more reflective of community interests way. The bottom-up approach encouraged the governments, which adopt the framework, to give time to build up capacity to comprehend complex needs and experiences at all levels by appropriate training and debates on practical gender needs and empowerment of women as well as men (European Comission 2008a). However, gender mainstreaming has been mostly adopted as a top-down approach of policy making in the EU, where the decisions are taken by authoritative governmental actors. The shift of the policy-making approach from bottom-up towards top-down opens a critical aspect of gender mainstreaming as a gender-equality promoter in the European Union. Instead of being an innitiative of suppressed societal group or an emancipatoric project, gender mainstreaming has become an instrument, serving the dominating economic interests of the EU to establish or strengthen its hegemony over the disadvantaged social group.

Gramsci's concept of hegemony is not reduced to the state's/group's ability to express power in the sense of law, military or other kind of direct violence. Instead, hegemony is the specific kind of expression of power through the civil society (Demirovic 2007:25). The term hegemony describes a particular form of political power, which functions through consensus and approval of morality, culture and ethics (Opratko 2012:37). „Die Hegemonie wird in Vereinen und Clubs, in der Gliederung des gesamten Bildungssystems, im Zeitungs- und Zeitschriftenwesen in seiner Gesamtheit, in der Philosophie und den Wissenschaften, im Musik- und Theaterleben, in Literatur und Sprache, Verlagwesen, Bibliotheken und Straßennamen, Folklore und Alltagsgewohnheiten, Religionen, Kirche und Sekten praktiziert" (Demirovic 2007:25). An important aspect of hegemony is handling the social change and keeping up the leadership in the society. Anne Showstack Sassoon proposes Gramsci's term *passive revolution* as „ a strategy for managing change in which the advantages of the already advantaged are preserved alongside real gains for wide sections of the population, but the full potential of progressive aspects of such profound historical change for the socially excluded is undermined" (Showstack Sassoon 2001:8). In addition, the passive revolution enforces the passivation of the subordinated group by implementing the aims of the subaltern in the ruling group's strategies and end-goals. The strategy by the hegemonic group/institution to implement the goals of the subordinated destroys the need of mass initiatives and prevents changes in the ruling-ruled relations (Adolphs; Karakayali 2007:124).

Stefanie Wöhl (2007) gives some essential explanations on how does gender mainstreaming work as a form of passive revolution to establish hegemony of economic interests of the European Union . She claims, that the union's hegemony emerges in a process of picking, reinterpreting and integrating symbolic elements and demands of feminist movements into union's targets: "Hier findet im gramscianischen Sinne eine Form der passive Revolution statt: Utopien und Elemente subalterner Gruppen und deren inhaltliche Positionen warden von (supra-)staatlichen Akteuren aufgegriffen, um den gesellschaftlichen Konsens nicht zu destabilisieren, der notwendig ist, um die Kernprojekte der Europäischen Union durchzusetzen" (Wöhl 2007:80). Wöhl further criticizes the lack of emancipatory power by gender mainstreaming, which is caused by implementing feminist struggle for equal employment opportunities into the strict framework of labour market: "Der neue 'Gendermarkt' an Gender-Trainings zeigt zudem bereits, inwiefern sich ein ursprünglich emanzipatives Projekt den Kriterien des Marktes anpassen muss, anstatt diesen grundsätzlicher in Frage zu stellen, um überhaupt Umsetzungschancen zu haben. Weder die Rationalität des Marktes noch die in ihm erst zu schaffenden Arbeitsplätze für Frauen und Männer werden hier kritisch hinterfragt" (Wöhl 2007:79). The suggestions by European Commission on how to increase gender equality in employment illustrate how the changes of the labour market demand as an emancipatory change are put aside, instead, the feminist attempt for equality is integrated in the already existing frames of labour market: " <…> active measures include training, job rotation and job sharing, employment incentives, integration of specific groups, direct job creation and start-up incentives" (European Comission 2008: 6). An established chance for employment and measures to be used in achieving gender equality, considered from critical perspective, has become a strategy

of hegemony: emancipation becomes achievable only in the frames of already predefined, rational, to demands of the labour market adapted criteria (Wöhl 2007:79), serving interests of the European Union-economic growth and increase of economic power, expansion of EU's influence on decision making on international level.

Some feminsits argue, that despite the fact that demands of the labour market make an immense influence while framing gender policies in the European Union, there are other, more influential factors than the interests of EU, implementing the primary goals of gender mainstreaming in order to achieve their own targets and extend their hegemony. One of such factors is the hierarchic gender order: social and cultural constructions of gender identities as well as institutionalized relations of power and privilege organized around gender difference. (Brenner 2002: 1). The cultural, symbolic ideals and perceptions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' are historically transfered through the gender-based division of labour and hegemonic forms of masculinism are established in the societal structures (Wöhl 2007:70). Those, who reduce masculinism as purely biological term, may claim that it is not relevant to the discussion of gender mainstreaming as instrument of hegemonic gender order, because more or less equal number of male and female individuals participate and are represented in the process of decision-making . However, masculinism may as well be understood on another, organizational level- as male definition of rules, values, norms and structures in the state institutions (Sauer 2009:69). Masculinism in institutions reproduces patriarchal *Herrschaft* by systematically constructing masculine identities as hegemonic and by privileging interests that reflect the everyday life of a particular, mostly male, social group (Sauer 2001:142). Looking from gramscian perspective, the masculine hegemony in EU handles feminist struggle for gender equality by fitting feminist ideas in the framework, based on masculine standards, norms and values like gender division of labour, separation of private and public spheres.

In sum, the feminist struggle to promote gender equality in form of gender mainstreaming has encountered some serious obstacles. The attempt for equal opportunities of women to participate in society as well as labour market have been put in the rational labour-oriented frame and some may argue, inscribed into masculine interests, standards and norms. This, from critical perspective, has transformed the social change and initiatives of society into statism, where state takes control of most social policies. The suppression of mass initiatives not only prevents the changes of hierarchic social structures, but also creates and strengthens the hegemony of the ruling ideas, groups or institutions. The article argues further that gender mainstreaming is rather an attempt of economic interests of the EU than masculinism to maintain hegemony over the subordinated social groups.

Gender mainstreaming policies: Mean to (Re)produce Hegemony of Economic EU Interests?

In this section of the article I will analyse the improvements of female equality in employment, caused by gender mainstreaming policies as an example of how rationality and interests of labour market are institutionalized as hegemonic power in the form of *passive revolution* in the EU.

The latest report on employment equality between women and men in labour market was issued by the EU in 2012 (European Commission, 2012). The report describes the current situation of women as follows: before the crisis, women were slowly catching up with men on the labour markets of all European countries. Their employment rate increased from 55 % in 1997 to 62.8 % in 2007, gaining 6.9 percentage points while the male employment rate increased from 75.3 % to 77.9 %, gaining 2.6 percentage points in the same period. The crisis has halted these positive trends. However, male employment dropped earlier and faster: the male employment rate went down to 74.6 % in 2012, its lowest level since 1997, while female employment decreased only slightly at 62.4 %. Women, according to the European Comission, „are no longer the 'buffer' of the labour market, called in when demand is high, but sent back home when demand contracts" (European Commission, 2012). The main areas of policy intervention explained in the report refer to closing the gender gaps in terms of increasing the employment rate of women and also in terms of creating the conditions for women to participate equally to men in the labor market (Lavena; Riccucci 2012).

However, statistics on increased rates in women's employment, rates on balanced pay for equal work do not explain much about the gender equality in the EU. Despite the formal promotion of equality in employment between women and men, the policies stay blind for 3 aspects of „the invisable subbordination"- the orientation towards demands of the labour market in employment , the standards of productive labourer based on economic interests instead of gender equality as well as prescribtion of reproductional, domestic work for women. These „invisable" factors of gender mainstreaming make it a hegemonic rather than emancipatoric project.

To begin with, the employment policies, struggling for gender equality are based on the demands of the labour market, instead of aim to achieve emancipation. The strategy within the EU employment policy is to cede the initiative in issues of working time, flexibility and work reorganization to the social partners (Rubery 2002: 513). However, the European Comission justifies its proposals not in terms of social justice as foreseen in the idea of gender mainstreaming, but in terms of its own interests: „Within work, women are over-represented in some sectors and professions and underrepresented in others. These labour-market rigidities, which impede Europe's capacity for growth and job creation, must be tackled" (Commission of the European Communities 1997a: 16). The EU has adopted an integrationist approach to gender mainstreaming, integrating women and gender issues into specific, by labour market defined policies rather than rethinking the aims of the EU from a gender perspective (Pollack, Hafner-Burton 2000: 452). Despite an increase in flexible employment (because of implementation of gender mainstreaming policies), to meet the needs of the market for greater flexibility, the employment market continues to revolve around the full-time worker (Cousins, 1999: 43) and as research shows, there are more opportunities to move from part-time to full-time work in the EU (Rubery 2002: 514). The full-time worker remains the industry's model for achieving advancement and promotion, thus failing to promote alternative socioeconomic structures that would allow for a more balanced division of paid and unpaid work (Webster, 2001: 26). The demand for labourers, however, has not occurred in a gender-neutral setting: the model of a full-time worker is usually identified

with the male worker and masculine standards of life. Stefanie Wöhl (2008) claims: „<...> die Gleichstellungsgesetze und -richtlinien der EU orientieren sich bisher immer noch normativ an männlichen Lebensmustern und Erwerbsbiografien". The demands for full-time worker of the labour market reproduces the role of the man as a main bread-winner and women as a secondary wage earner in the family, which stimulates gender inequality as well as establishes hegemonic character of labour market demands.

The goal to prevent the traditional family roles in the EU and promote gender equality has been ascribed to EU policies since its establishment. The policies aiming to promote female participation have changed significantly in the long-run. From 1990's, work/family reconciliation has been more firmly integrated into the Guidelines accompanying the European Employment Strategy (EES), with the result that the policy focus has narrowed substantially from stimulating men's interest to participate in family life using parental leave towards the provision of childcare services, provided by the state, which are more likely to promote female labour market participation than measures that provide time to care for both parents (Lewis 2006:16). The provision of parental leave in the last decade has brought about clear improvements in share of the household duties, but men's take up rate remains minimal in the EU (European Commission, 1998: 9; Guerrina 2002:61). The desire to increase women's labour market participation has proved a powerful spur to laggard member states, but one that does not necessarily have much to do with the promotion of gender equality per se (Stratigaki 2004; Lewis 2006). The Council of Ministers for Employment and Social Policy's Resolution argumented for the need to reform 'work organisation' by increasing flexibility, in which the provision of childcare was recognised to play an important part, were made without any reference to equal opportunities, but rather to the increase of productivity, growth, attraction of work, which should raise the employment rate of women: "It is about the scope for improving employment and competitiveness through a better organisation of work at the workplace, based on high skill, high trust and high quality. It is about the will and ability of management and workers to take initiatives, to improve the quality of goods and services, to make innovations and to develop the production process and consumer relations" (European Commission 1997). The means by which member states should reach the target for female employment was gender mainstreaming: formal, institutional provision of childcare instead of reformulation of labour market demands. The shift in work/family reconciliation policies towards a more exclusive focus on childcare services instead of parental leave to enable higher female labour participation rates links strongly to the promotion of an adult citizen worker model family, while the expanded notion of equality found in the new anti-discrimination measures also betokens the priority given to accessing the labour market (Lewis 2006: 22). Social policies framed as a 'productive factor', as promotion of employment of all adults, female and male, necessary prerequisite for the economic agenda of competition and growth and does not aim for emancipation as the end-goal, but rather are instruments to establish the hegemony of economic EU interests, which aim for economic growth.

In this sense, the idea of gender equality and the gender mainstreaming policies on female employment stand in contradictory relationship. On one hand, gender mainstreaming plays a significant and liberating

role in women's lives providing more opportunities to enter the labour market and involve gender-specific issues in policy-making process. On the other hand, gender mainstreaming serves the demands of the labour market: the model of a productive labourer remains a full-time worker. The policies on parenthood in the EU are as well inconsistent: instead of promoting parental leaves and more sustainable lifestyles where both parents are responsible for household duties and childcare, the gender mainstreaming model reproduces traditional gender role-models. Institutional provision of childcare 'liberates' exceptionally female individuals from domestic works and emancipates her for exploitation in the interest of labour market and economic growth of EU, it diminishes attention to promoting the equal share of unpaid care work between men and women.

   Such contradiction of gender mainstreaming policies has two-fold consequences. Firstly, the hegemony of labour market interests is reproduced and instead of aiming for gender equality and women's emancipation, gender mainstreaming serves the economic needs and concerns of the European Union. Orientation to economic goals of EU creates various risks in society: reproduction of sexism and traditional gender roles, establishment of hierarchic societal structures as well as sharp demographic changes.

   One further danger, caused by the gender mainstreaming policies is the *passive revolution* in gramscian sense: the massive initiatives and organisation of societal transformation towards new model of society is prevented, because the goals of the suppressed social group become visible and important, yet solved in a suppressive way. The ruling-ruled relations stay unchallenged in the interest of the hegemonic power of EU.

Gender mainstreaming: hegemony of western scholarship?

 The goal of gender mainstreaming to transofrm policy processes so that gender equality is promoted, has not been realized successfully yet. Some observers claim: "despite a much greater level of overall awareness on gender issues, and despite the solid body of research and analysis that now exists, policy and programmes continue to show very limited and compartmentalized concerns with gender equity" (Kabeer, 2003: 24).

   This section of the article will argue that gender mainstreaming has some conceptional drawbacks. Firstly, it does not recognize the difference of experiences, views and goals inbetween of the social group ‚women' in the European Union. Secondly, the article will highlight the limitations of gender mainstreaming as a single issue policy, which only recognises the axis of ‚gender' as the main feature of subbordination without considering race and class as relevant facet of discrimination.

   To begin with, it is important to define which women with what experiences does the gender mainstreaming struggle to include into policy making. It is problematic to claim, as Mohanty has written, that women are "an already constituted, coherent group with identical interests and desires, regardless of class, ethnic or racial or locations, or contradictions"(1997: 80). What brings women together is a notion of the 'sameness' of their situation in the society: this societal group is commonly identified with being supressed, powerless and persecuted. „An elision takes place between 'women' as a discursively constructed group and 'women' as

material subjects of their own history. Thus, the discursively consensual homogeneity of 'women' as a group is mistaken for the historically specific material reality of groups of women"(Mohanty 1997: 65).

Mohanty has contributed some valuable insights from the perspective of „the third world", claiming that the „western scholarship" takes the hegemonic position, monopoly of scientific knowledge and ideal of creativity (Mohanty 1997:63) over the one of the rest of the world and puts most attention to the interests and problems of white middle-class female. Considering the European Union, the cultural and historical differences between the societal groups in the member states is not that immense in comparison to the heterogenity on the global scale. The premise of homogenity of women as a societal group, experiencing simmilar inequality, may be noticed in the rhetorics of European Union representatives: „Women have made great advances, but there is still a long way to go to achieve a world free from gender-based discrimination" (Ashton 2014). The concept of gender mainstreaming in EU belongs to the framework, which does not challenge and refuse the normalization that occurs when describing women as a solid group. In the context of European Union, a good example for „women of difference" would be experiences of women from western states with longer democratic history and of those of Eastern post-Soviet countries. Gender discrimination in the labor market leading to women's higher unemployment rates, and under representation in the public sphere is a clear sign of patriarchic unemancipatoric structures and oppression. However, the opinion of females from the post-Soviet union may perceive the idea of gender equality from a completely different perspective. „Throughout the [Post-Soviet] region, women's movements have not been widely supported. The reasons for this are complex and may relate to the communist ideology which revised the very concepts of equality and liberation to fit into the communist discourse (Funk, 1993). Russian feminist Olga Lipovskaya (1994: 274) claims, that "Total rejection of the socialist ideals of the past has seriously challenged the notion of sexual equality." Indeed, rejecting the idea of equality, which is often identified with communist ideology, is seen as liberating by some women in Post-Soviet states. In addition, the complete rejection of the communist ideology has caused a wave of nationalism in Eastern European countries. The role of women as citizens is to build the national image and care for the family, which is considered the core unit of the nation-state: "Estonian women have nobody to fight against. Our men are so defenseless and have suffered so from the cruel destiny of our state that the very task of women is to protect them by making a stable home" (Hallas, 1994: 299).

It is important here to highlight that gender mainstreaming is considered to be a global initiative, but the policy transfer from one location to another, from one sociohistoric context to another, from one political system to another is complicated and not yet comprehensively considered.

Gender mainstreaming- a single issue policy?

One of the most important theoretical critiques on gender mainstreaming to be ineffective in promoting gender equality is the one of intersectionality. A professor, specializing in race and gender issues, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, introduced the concept of intersectionality as an escape from the problems of identity

politics, to „denote the various ways in which race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of Black women's employment experiences" (Crenshaw, 1989: 139). The concept of intersectionality acknowledges that gender does not operate in isolation but in relation to other factors such as race, ethnicity, ability, age, sexual orientation, geographic location and so on. Seen from the perspective of gender equality, and the interface between gender, race, class, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality and power are not adequately reflected in the concept of gender mainstreaming or in the strategies and tools that have been developed to engender public policy (Hankivsky 2005:978). In addition, there is little consensus about what adequate theoretical accounts of intersectionality with regard to gender mainstreaming in European contexts should look like.

Hankivsky (2005:992) claims, that there are various suggestions on how to improve the gender mainstreaming model in order to include various axes of oppression into policy processes as well as decision making. Some claim, that what's essential is not to abandon the analytical category of gender, but to explicitly recognize that it is not the primary or key axis of social oppression, and work towards a mainstreaming framework that does more than add or attend to difference while transforming the very policies and practices from which difference emerges (Beveridge and Nottt, 2002). Hankivsky (2005:993), however, proposes the concept of „diversity mainstreaming" as a framework that effectively captures the relationships between all these different and multiple equality grounds. In gender mainstreaming framework, gender is dominant, and dynamics of oppression and their consequences may be marginalized or completely invisible. Diversity mainstreaming, in comparison, according to Hankivsky, „neither prioritizes nor essentializes gender or race or any other factor", „this approach goes beyond adding one-dimensional terms like race/ethnicity or social class to a long list of other variables ... and looking for multiplicative effects". Diversity mainstreaming should consider multiple forms of discrimination in their intersections and allow the understanding of gender relations in their specific context, and in particular, their relationship to other structures of inequality such as class, ethnicity, nationality and sexual orientation, among others (Hankivsky, 2005:994).

 In addition, it is important for the diversity mainstreaming model to recognize the intersections of local in relation to national or even regional perspectives on multiple inequalities in order to avoid the spreading of „the hegemony of western scholarship" (Mohanty 1997:64) „Any examination of the racialized, gendered identity in a local, ethnic context is imbricated in a larger, transnational frame. Feminist representations of difference must attend closely to this postcolonial move to account for the interplay between the local and global, the minority and hegemonic culture" (Hegde, 1998:282). Instead of being a single, prioritized concept of gender equality promotion, gender mainstreaming should be more flexible dealing with a great variety in terms of the concepts of equality, in the interpretation of policyand the implications for managerial and organization practice (Dawn Metcalfe, Afanassieva 2005:407).

Conclusion

All in all, gender mainstreaming policies in the European Union are rather unsuccessful attempts to promote emancipation and gender equality. Despite the increasing rates of female participation in decision-making and policy-making processes, there are other significant aspects, showing the limits of gender mainstreaming as emancipatory project.

The feminist claims have been implemented into European Union policies not as the end-goal, but rather as an instrument, serving economic interests of the EU. Increasing women's employment as full-time labourers does not show their equal opportunities to men, it shows their exploitation for the economic growth of EU. In addition, the 'emancipatory policies' of state provided childcare does not promote gender equality by releasing women from their childrearing duties, but it reproduces traditional gender roles where man is a main bread-winner and a women is a housewife, caring for the domestic work. Families, in which both parents labour full-time and use the public childcare instead of using parental leave and sharing household duties, serve the interests of EU economic growth rather than gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming as a hegemonic top-down project of the European Union takes place in the form of *passive revolution* in gramscian sense: the massive initiatives and organisation of societal transformation towards new model of society is prevented, because on the superficial level, the goals to aim are reached and there is no clear enemy for feminists to fight against. The ruling-ruled relations stay unchallenged in the interest of the hegemonic power of EU.

Gender mainstreaming as well encounters some conceptual limitations. The gender equality policies in the EU are aiming 'women' without considering socio-historic differences of women in different regions of the EU. The concept of gender equality and emancipation has been accepted as a 'common sense', without taking experiences and norms of the European women from post-Soviet countries as valuable material for a more complex definition of emancipation in account. Gender mainstreaming does not successfully promote emancipation in the European Union, because it does not recognise the diversity of possible understandings of gender equality.

A focus on antidiscrimination does not necessarily attack the structures and values that underlie discriminatory behaviour (Woodward 2008:298). And so is the conceptual limitation of gender mainstreaming policies. Despite aiming for emancipation, the policies consider gender as the most important category of discrimination, leaving intersections of race and class without particular consideration. A more intersectional approach, which posits an interactive, mutually constitutive relationship among various categories of subordination is highly recommended for the institutions/actors of the European Union in order to achieve emancipation .

A proposal of diversity mainstreaming approach by Olena Hankivsky gives some valuable inspirations on how a more effective top-down policies of gender issues should be established, considering gender in

relation to class and race in the struggle to overcome inequality. Linda Haas suggests changes in the care work system in order to achive women's emancipation: „A more lengthy and paid parental leave will stimulate parents to choose both labour market activity and a certain period of care for children. To promote a shared responsibility between women and men concerning the care for children, parental leave regulations should include both maternity leave and paternity leave, reserving a mandatory part of the parental leave for each parent" (Haas 2003:109). However, my suggestion on how to achieve gender equality and emancipation of women remains based on bottom-up mass initiatives instead of top-down expression of the economic interests of the EU. For more emancipation, both women and men should seek for liberation from on labour market and EU interest based frameworks of full-time employment, use the opportunity of paternity/maternity leave to establish a closer connections between family members and care for a better life.

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